

Children's Bullying Experiences and Self-Worth
Perceptions in a Private School

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Abstract

This study explored children's bullying experiences (as bully, victim, and bystander) and their self-worth perceptions in a private school in Ontario, Canada. Forty students from 12 different countries participated in a mixed methodology (both quantitative and qualitative) research design using a self-report questionnaire. Students reported involvement in bullying as a bully, victim, and bystander. The overall results reveal a pattern across the three roles where the degree of bullying observed as a bystander is the highest (57%) followed by the experiences as a victim (29%) and that performed as bully (21%). The bystanders reported direct bullying being witnessed, bullies reported indirect bullying interventions as being used, and victims of bullying reported indirect bullying being the most common type of bullying they experienced. Decreased feeling of self-worth is reported in the qualitative research data in regards to bullying. Boarding students reported issues regarding personal safety, need for social relationships, self-worth, and unacceptability of bullying. Implications for practice for the private school are discussed, focusing on the outcome of this study.

Acknowledgments

When geese fly in formation, they travel about 70% faster than when they fly alone. Geese share leadership. When the lead goose tires, she rotates back into the “V” and another flies forward to become the leader. Geese keep company with the fallen. When a sick or weak goose drops out of the flight formation, at least one other goose joins to help and protect. By being part of a team, we too can accomplish much more, much faster. Words of encouragement and support (honking from behind) help inspire and energize those on the front lines, helping them to keep pace in spite of the day-to-day and fatigue, and finally showing compassion and active caring for others—a member of the ultimate team: “Humankind.”

This thesis has spanned many years and a severe car accident. I am grateful to Dr. Sandra Bosacki, Dr. Zopito Marini, and Dr. Alice Schutz at Brock University, in particular to Sandra, whose encouragement and honking convinced me to complete this worthwhile endeavour. My family and friends provided me with support and inspired me endlessly to complete this piece of research. “Thanks” Frank, Ian, Regan, Mary, Mom and Dad—without my home team this would have been near impossible.

I have a deep sense of caring, and I do hope this research will add value to the life of the students at the private school.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

I believe that schools and other institutions, where they stand in the place of parents of young people, do have a positive duty to be vigilant, to put in place programmes to guard against bullying, whether it is physical or emotional, and to deal firmly with it and stamp it out if it occurs, Coroner's Report, 1997.

Bullying among school children is no doubt a very old phenomenon and is an international problem. Many adults have personal experiences of bullying from their school days. In the *New York Times*, June 17, 2003, Marilyn Berger wrote a tribute at his death to a famous actor who had attended the private school. The tribute contained much information about the actor's successes in his 91 years, but it was this passage about his private schooling experience that is of interest: "I was the smallest boy and subject to chronic bullying," he said. "That's why I learned to box. It was not out of an aggressive nature, but I had to defend myself" (p. A1).

Over the last 25 years, school bullying has become recognized as a problem that is present in most, if not all, schools and in a wide variety of countries (Smith, Shu, & Madsen, 2001). School bullying is an accumulation of negative but organized and systematic reactions that occur over a period of time. During school bullying one student repeatedly directs these reactions onto another student. Those negative reactions, which can include physical, social, and emotional bullying, are often demonstrated in the following ways: threats, physical attacks, words, gestures, or social exclusion. The bullying occurs in a framework where there is an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim. Once shrugged off as a "kids-will-be-kids" attitude, bullying and teasing are no longer considered a childhood rite of passage

(Goldbloom, 2004). No age, gender, or socioeconomic boundaries exist as bullying behaviours are studied and researched. Today this type of behaviour cannot and will not be tolerated in school settings. A continuous environment of being bullied can cause emotional and psychological pain to the students (Nicolaidis, Toda, & Smith, 2002), and the culture in the school in which bullying is permitted is likely to be damaging to social relationships generally and a poor academic introduction to citizenship (Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 2001). School culture values and practices an antibullying ethos. By maintaining an inclusive, safe, and supportive school culture, the school requires a whole-school approach to tackle bullying. The whole school approach is based on shared values, beliefs, and attitudes within the school community.

Contemporary issues relevant to bullying face all students; this is particularly true when the students are in a private school. In addition to personal and family realms, school bullying also relates to academic and school issues. In this heightened era of globalization, students of today look to teaching faculty and school personnel for moral, psychological, cognitive, and intellectual cues in bullying prevention. Both students and parents in private schools have the expectation that bullying will be addressed by all personnel and eradicated. Often this is a primary reason for choosing a private school education versus a publicly funded school experience in the education of children.

From the growing literature on bullying behaviour it is recognized that students who have been subjected to peer victimization have poor self-worth (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Neary & Joseph, 1994; Olweus, 1993, 1994; O'Moore & Kirkham,

2001). Self-esteem partially mediates relations between some peer relationship difficulties and internalizing problems (Bosacki, Dane, & Marini, 2007). Several aspects of maladjustment in adulthood have been linked to bullying experiences during childhood and adolescence. Some of the outcomes include criminal convictions, unemployment, smoking and substance use, partner abuse, depression and anxiety, lower level of education, school dropouts, and not attaining the highest occupational level (Farrington, 1993; Rigby, 2001).

This study explored school-aged children's perceptions of school bullying experiences in a private school in Ontario, Canada. The private school is attended by over 630 boarding and day students from 34 countries that pay tuition to attend. As well, this study examined relations among bullying experiences and the students' self-worth perceptions. Incidental findings relating to intrapersonal functioning are reported upon as well.

Background of the Problem

Violence and aggression in schools is a problem in many countries around the world (e.g., Australia: Rigby & Slee, 1991; Canada: Pepler & Craig, 2000; Craig & Pepler, 2003; England: Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Scandinavia: Olweus, 1993). One form of aggression that takes place at school is bullying. Bullying is an interaction in which a dominant individual (the bully) repeatedly exhibits aggressive behaviour intended to cause distress to a less dominant individual (the victim; Olweus). Along with the immediate effects of bullying, this behaviour has long term negative consequences for all those involved: bullies (Farrington, 1993), victims (Olweus), and bystanders. Children who are bullies tend to be adult bullies, and have

children who are also bullies and children who are victimized tend to have children who are also victimized (Farrington). Research is clear that children who consistently engage in aggressive behaviours are more likely to continue such behaviours as adults unless they are provided reasons to change (Roberts, 2006). Failure to act early in countering the aggressive behaviours of children may well be a life sentence for those individuals to continue a lifetime of aggression and/or pass those aggressive tendencies on to their children, hence setting the stage for the next generation of potential bullies (Roberts).

Canadians are concerned with the level of violence in today's society, safety within communities, and the welfare of the children in our society. Many children are victims of violence and aggression in the schoolyard, within their play environment and elsewhere such as their private school community. In Canada, 15% of children reported bullying others more than twice a term, while 9% of children reported bullying others on a weekly basis (Craig & Pepler, 2003).

Children visit the Health Centre at the private school in Ontario and entrust their stories of aggressive behaviours, better known as bullying, to the staff. When one reflects on the children's' stories including: physical assaults; e-bullying tactics on their computers (hate e-mails, gendered comments, musical compositions that attack culture, gender, and sexual orientation); as well as social manipulation (students in and out of friendship relationships, concern of how others will react to what they say and do, cultural and gender attacks); students collectively using the "right of passage" in their dorms; and some students are the target of vicious rumours of unknown origin, I am inspired to investigate these events. The students' stories are

often told with great sadness. The student is upset emotionally as well as physically. At first the student is seeking confidentiality from the medical staff member as well as a sense of trust. Often the student doesn't want anyone to know but wants some assistance at this time. With time and discussion, the staff is often able to facilitate some help both for the student as well as the community as a whole.

Bullying among school children is a global problem that has been documented in many countries throughout the world such as United Kingdom, Canada, United States, Japan, and Australia (O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999; Olweus, 1993; Smith & Sharp, 1994). All worldwide research reports similar bullying trends and high rates of bullying behaviours in schools. This in itself indicates a serious social and educational problem that warrants thorough and immediate research attention.

Bullying is systemic, extending beyond the bully and victim. When comparing bullying to other forms of aggression, bullying unfolds in a set of social contexts: the dyad, the peer group, the playground, and the school culture. It is important to stop bullying and strive to create a safe and peaceful environment for all children (Rigby, 2008; Sullivan, K., 2001).

Statement of the Problem

While the systematic study of bullying in school children is a well-established area of research in public schools (Bryne, 1994; Morris, Zhane, & Bondy, 2006; Rigby, 2001), it is comparatively understudied in the private school (Craig & Pepler, 2003) setting in Canada. Therefore the problem underlying this study is the need to explore children's bullying experiences and their self-worth perceptions in a private school. The focus of the present research analysis is a private school in Ontario,

Canada. The private school in this research has both boarding and day students. Upon completion of the research the findings will be shared within the private school community. The sharing of the research will provide an understanding of factors related to bullying and have a significant impact on the development of future programs. As well, the private school community could possibly look to the outcomes of these relations in planning in concert the role of school personnel in bullying prevention for the private school community.

Purpose of the Study

Both theoretical and empirical evidence has demonstrated harmful physical and psychological effects of bullying behaviours on the aggressor, victim, and bystander (Rhodes, 1998). The development and implementation of educational programs for the improvement of children's mental health and violence prevention are priorities for school personnel. Therefore the purpose of this study was to investigate children's perceptions of bullying experiences and examine relations among perceptions of bullying and their self-worth in a private school. In the private school studied it will be of interest to compare boarding and day students experiences. An understanding of the relation between self-worth and bullying is critical if school personnel are to develop and implement an antibullying program.

Questions to be Answered

The general question underlying this investigation was as follows:
to examine the relation between students' bullying experiences (as bully, victim, and bystander) and their self-worth perceptions.

The study focused on exploring the following specific research questions:

1. As an observer to bullying behaviours, are the student's social relationships, discipline, and safety affected?
2. As a participant in bullying behaviours, are the student's social relationships, discipline, and safety affected?
3. As a recipient of bullying behaviours, are the student's social relationships, discipline, and safety affected?
4. Is there an association between children's perceptions of bullying experiences and their perceptions of self-worth?

It was predicted that students' perception of self-worth would differ across the various roles of being a victim, bystander and bully.

Definition of Terms

Each of the key terms related to this study is defined and explained throughout the research. Explanation of the terms throughout the document was viewed as a logical and rhetorical approach, as it provides the reader with immediate clarification of the meaning of terms being relied upon in this study.

For the purpose of this study a list of definitions is included in Appendix A.

Rationale

In the past quarter of a century empirical investigation in both understanding and reducing bullying behaviours within the school communities has made progress. Bullying has been studied most extensively in the Scandinavian countries (Olweus, 1993) and the United Kingdom (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Smith & Sharp, 1994). In the late 90s some empirical research has been conducted in North America.

Some research conducted within Canada has focused on bullying. An increasing number of Canadian studies have examined the incidence of bullying among elementary and middle school students, one reported 28% of the students being bullied and the other 21% (Smith, et al., 1999). Craig, Pepler, and Atlas (2000) report on research conducted using naturalistic observations of bullying episodes among elementary school-aged children in the classroom and on the playground; these findings illuminate the role of peers in the bullying and opportunities for interventions. According to Craig et al., bullying has only recently become the object of systematic research in Canada. Such a comment, considering the tribute to the famous actor that cited bullying some 80 years ago in his Canadian private school experience, raises concerns to those in the academic settings in Canada regarding bullying.

The literature that I have reviewed provides little mention of any Canadian research in private schools. Limited private school research has been published from Spain (Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999 cited in Smith et al., 1999) and South Africa, Malawi (Ohsako, 1999 cited in Smith et al., 1999). *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Hughes, 1999), a world classic, was published in 1869 and certainly relates stories of bullying in his private school. By doing this research I am able to add the private school lens to bullying investigation from Canada. More research in Ontario is needed on this problem of bullying as well as continued research examining the effectiveness of educational prevention and intervention programs.

My research focuses on the children's voices and their perceptions of school bullying experiences and perceptions of self-worth in a private school in Ontario, Canada. The children have shared their experiences with the health team; as well, as

the team has observed some aggressive behaviours at the private school. I care deeply for children and hopefully will be able to provide some possible practical implications to make these years for the adolescents of the private school a positive experience.

Importance of the Study

Investigating school-aged children's perceptions of bullying experiences in a private school and examining the relations among bullying experiences and students' self-worth perceptions is likely to elicit both theoretical and practical implications of this research.

In general the results from this research project will help us to understand how girls and boys perceive social situations in the private school. Also, as an educator and researcher, I am interested in applying the information gathered from this study to fields of teaching/learning, curriculum development, and the helping professions.

First, the study investigated further the three components of the Multidimensional Bullying Identification Model (Marini, Fairbairn, & Zuber, 2001). The three distinct components of the model are meant to be comprehensive and focus on the central elements of this complex phenomenon, including (a) direct and indirect bullying behaviours, (b) the three major groups of participants, and (c) defining characteristics of bullying. This multidimensional approach to the identification of bullying provides a detailed and consistent description of this complex behaviour. Although other researchers have identified similar types of bullying behaviours, this model provides a systematic way of integrating the major types of bullying into a single and coherent framework (Craig, Pepler, Connolly, & Henderson, 2001; Rigby, 1996; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Second, this study examines the relation between children's bullying experiences and students' self-worth perceptions. As with bullying, self-worth is a complex issue, both conceptually and methodologically. For example, past research suggests that victims often report low self-esteem, likely because of repeated exposure to victimization (Besag, 1989). Bullies seem to be clever in blaming the victim for doing something or representing something negative, which validates their behaviour (Sutton, Smith, & Swettenham, 1999).

Incidental findings relating to students' intrapersonal functioning are reported upon. Some of the intrapersonal functioning areas identified were one's anxiety, sadness, safety, and lack of self-worth. Areas of interpersonal relationships, ethnicity, gender, and age are also revealed in the findings reported by the students.

From a practical standpoint, this study is valuable, as the results could hold important implications for educators and curriculum planners at the private school. I believe children underreport bullying. Adair's (1999) New Zealand based study found that 81% of the students observed bullying, but 21% reported bullying to an adult. As well, in Canadian studies by Craig (1998) and Pepler and Craig (2000), it was found that students perceived teachers as infrequently intervening in bullying incidents. The students felt the teachers were unaware and sometimes chose not to intervene. The victims are left with feelings of powerlessness and being isolated or even trapped. Do they feel safe in this community? This is an important consideration when over twothirds of the private school students are boarding students. It is hoped that this study will reveal certain patterns and trends with respect to children's perceptions of school bullying experiences in a private school. The

literature supports the belief that planned interventions in school communities can be successful. It is a well-known fact that the "whole school community approach" is required to bring about reductions in bullying. All school staff, including teaching faculty, house staff, maintenance, and health professionals must be committed and act together in a planned, agreed-upon strategy to counter bullying. Students themselves as well as parents play a pivotal role in the process.

The findings from the present study will certainly be shared with the private school participants, families, administration, and faculty. The research will provide a foundation for a systematic approach to deal with bullying as it occurs. It takes the involvement of the entire school community to work together and bring about change within the community-one can't do this on one's own.

After completing the research, the study data will provide an important framework for all school nurses, in particular in private and parochial school settings. The study will be shared with my colleagues at the Independent School Association Health Services across Canada, the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) in the form of a poster presentation, the Sigma Theta Tau International Honour Society of Nursing, and placed in the IRC in the Master of Education thesis library at Brock University.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study used mixed methodology design. A quantitative/qualitative questionnaire, an adjusted Modified School-Life Questionnaire based on the work of Zopito Marini's (1998) Multidimensional Bullying Identification Model and Susan Harter's (1982) Perceived Competence Scale for Children were used to examine

relations among bullying and self-worth. See Appendix B. Reference to the implications of the findings may provide school personnel with bully prevention strategies in the private school. The scope of this study is limited to the grade 7 and 8 students at one private school in Ontario. The number of respondents for the study is limited to a maximum of 40 students. The students who participated in this study had parental as well as personal consent prior to completing the questionnaire.

It was assumed that the participants would answer the questionnaire openly and honestly. The validity of the open-ended questions is difficult to assess, but the researcher was dealing with the students; responses that explore views, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes interpreted through the student's own experiences.

The purpose of the adjusted Modified School-Life Questionnaire was to find out about the students' school life things such as social relationships, discipline, safety, and bullying. Susan Harter's questionnaire supplied a subscale for global self-worth.

This study will not go beyond discovery, understanding and description of possible curriculum development in the private school where the research was completed. The questionnaire and information obtained can be adapted and used in other private schools; however, the results of the study should be viewed as restrictive and should not be generalized as typical of all students undergoing a similar experience. While the results of this study may be of interest to other private schools and suggest opportunities for further research, they should not be taken as categorical for all. It is important to note all students are different, and private schools can vary dramatically in policy, culture, and student enrollment.

Questionnaire method of data collection is limited by their inability to identify the complex, multilevel processes underlying bullying interactions and by the students' ability to accurately report on the phenomenon of bullying. The behaviours of the students cannot be recorded firsthand as they occurred; hence, external validity is lessened. Second, the researcher was not able to observe all participants (bullying student, victim, observers, and faculty) of the bullying incident. Future research needs to employ multiple methods such as interviews, questionnaires, and observations.

The sample is limited in that only two grades from one private school were being considered in this study. Therefore, the findings may not be able to be generalized to students in other school settings who reside in other geographic settings.

Finally, future studies might take other variables into consideration as well as doing a longitudinal multimethod study.

Outline for the Remainder of the Document

Chapter Two acquaints the reader with the existing literature relating to bullying and self-worth in adolescents. The chapter delves into the relations among the variables as well as the impact of gender. The chapter concludes with a synthesis of education implications relating to bullying and self-worth in adolescents in a private school.

Chapter Three describes the research methodology, methodological assumptions and limitations, selection of subjects, the instrumentation, and the research procedures. As well, the methods of data collection, recording, and analysis are described.

Chapter Four presents the findings of the data collected based on the preliminary questionnaires, themes that emerged from the questionnaire, and recommendations proffered by the students who participated in the research study. An interpretation of these findings is also offered.

Chapter Five provides a summary of the results and sets out the conclusions of this study. It invites the reader into a discussion regarding the topic of the relations of bullying, intrapersonal functioning, and the students' perceptions of the school bullying experience. The study results may provide important implications for educators and curriculum planners.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the literature dealing with bullying, self-worth and intrapersonal functioning as well as an application of findings to practice.

Bullying

Students at school are bullied, got bullied, and observed bullying. Fact of life and no big deal! This study examined the epidemiology of school bullying, the types of bullying, and the physical characteristics of the participants in the bullying roles at a private school in Ontario, Canada.

Epidemiology of School Bullying

School bullying has been empirically studied the globe over since Olweus's book, *Aggression in the Schools*, in 1978. This international dimension has brought the challenge to the world over in the definition of the English word bullying. Global interest in the topic of school bullying is a growing interest. The word bullying has many definitions around the globe. There are multiple dimensions of bullying. In any culture, the issue of definition is central. A more restricted definition of bullying would also assist in the comparability of research across cultures, since the term is shaped by English colloquialism and an exact meaning is generally not found in the dictionary of other languages. Some countries such as Poland have no direct translation of the word bullying. In order to make comparisons across cultures more meaningful, it appears that future research would benefit from an increased specificity in the definition and operationalization of bullying (Zins, Elias, & Maher, 2007). This is particularly so in this study, as the private school where the research was conducted has students attending class from 34 countries.

The private school in this study is in Ontario, Canada and has a religious base and is self-governed by an appointed board of governors. The students are both boarding and day students. The majority of the students are boarding. The students at this private school are from 34 countries. The students represent many cultures and within the cultures are social structures and subcultures which are seen within a private school setting. Each family pays a set tuition cost plus the cost of books, uniforms, school trips, and a personal computer (approximate cost is \$45,000 per year for boarding students). The students choose to attend the private school because of the smaller class size, enhanced study, specialized arts and sports programs and the availability of community service within the educational curriculum. The private school students wake up at 7:00 AM and have breakfast together. Many day students come to school and attend breakfast in the dining hall with the boarding students each day. Many students have a band practice from 7:30 to 8:00 before they go to classes. Classes start at 8:15 and conclude at approximately 3:00 PM. The students eat their lunch together in the dining hall. After class the students have sports (where they have tried out for a team), an organized activity of either cadets, a chosen community service activity and/or an activity which is offered by a member of faculty. Following the activity/sports time each day the students have supper together in the dining hall between 5:00 and 6:00. At approximately 7:00 they gather together and have study until 9:00 PM. Following study they begin to get ready for bed, which means they are in bed by 9:45 PM. Having paid the tuition for their children to attend a private school versus a public school, parents feel they have a sense of ownership and entitlement to participate in the educational needs of their children both in the

classroom and outside the classroom setting. The feeling of entitlement of parents is often expressed to the administration and faculty when they learn of an incident not meeting their expectations of the private school setting. I am sure that most families believe that having paid for the education of their children, then the private school setting will be close to perfect and free of any evils such as bullying. The literature reviewed by me is limited regarding private schools. When reviewing the world classic, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, (Hughes, 1999) there is reference to "tossing," that refers to the inability of schoolboys to go to bed in quietness and peace. This "tossing" is a reference to children trying to go to sleep in their school dormitory only to be bullied by others in the dorm. Sharrieff (2008) writes about his experience in British boarding schools that he attended. He describes new students often being put through a form of bullying known as "squashing" by their prefects (senior students in school leadership roles). He goes on to say that school authorities are well aware that this takes place but tolerate it as a toughening up that rookies need to build character. Finally, there is a form of behaviour, much practiced in some schools, and especially in boarding schools, that is akin to bullying and is known as "hazing." This may be defined as acting on behalf of a privileged group to systematically embarrass, humiliate, or degrade someone as a necessary precondition to their acceptance as a member of that group or team. It is said to constitute a "rite of passage" and is supposedly sanctioned by tradition (Rigby, 2008). My sense of caring and the stories of the students at private school are what prompted me to study children's bullying experiences and self-worth perceptions at an Ontario private school.

For the purposes of my study, I use the following definition of bullying.

“Bullying can be defined as the abuse of physical and psychological power for the purpose of intentionally and repeatedly creating a negative atmosphere of severe anxiety, intimidation and chronic fear in victims” as outlined by (Marini et al., 1999, p. 36).

According to Olweus (1993, 1994), a child is considered bullied if she or he is repeatedly exposed to negative actions from at least one other person over time. Grills and Ollendick (2002) define a negative action as an intentional infliction of discomfort that may take the form of physical contact, words, facial expressions and gestures, intentional defiance of one's wishes or requests, or social isolation and exclusion. Marini and Dane (2008) further state that bullying is a type of peer aggression characterized by repeated and systematic coercive use of power. Bullying has a significant impact on those who bully, are victimized, and are bystanders, often causing major concern to educators and health care providers. Bullying has only harmful, and certainly no beneficial, effects for the target, the perpetrator, and even the bystander.

Bullying is a unique form of peer aggression due to the existence of three main elements. Bullying involves a power differential between victim and bully, repeated use of aggression against the victim, and intent on the part of the bully to cause harm to the victim (Olweus, 1993; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

First, bullying incidents involve an imbalance of strength between the bully and the victim. This unilateral power relationship may be psychological and/or physical in nature (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Olweus, 1993, 1999; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Bullies may rely on greater physical strength and stature, weapons, or group bullying techniques in order to gain physical power over victims. Psychological power may arise from greater social status as well as an awareness of victim insecurities or vulnerabilities (Marini et al., 1999; O'Connell et al., 1999). The issue of a power differential between the victim and bully is integral for an accurate understanding of the phenomenon of bullying (Olweus, 1993). What is most important is the notion that a quarrel or fight between individuals with the same approximate power does not constitute bullying.

Second, bullying involves repeated use of aggression against the victim. Bullying is a form of aggression in which a behavioural pattern is typically established (Olweus, 1993). Not only is the victim bullied repeatedly over time, but also a pattern may develop with respect to how, where, and when the victim is bullied (Olweus, 1999). For instance, a child may be regularly subjected to teasing and taunts on the bus rides at school. Isolated acts of aggression between peers are usually not regarded as bullying behaviour.

Third, bullying refers to aggressive behaviours acted with intent. There is intent on the part of the bully to cause harm or discomfort to the victim (Olweus, 1993; Smith & Sharp, 1994). The intent may be to cause physical harm and/or psychological discomfort. Physical harm refers to some form of direct injury to the body, whereas psychological discomfort refers to a variety of negative emotions, feelings, and attitudes a victim can develop towards self and others (Marini et al., 1999). Obtaining interpersonal dominance over an individual or group of people is the

ultimate anticipated outcome of bullying behaviour (Coie, Dodge, Terry, & Wright, 1991).

In addition to these three elements which focus on actual behaviour, Marini et al. (1999) also emphasize a fourth element, which deals with the devastating consequences for the victim. The fourth characteristic of bullying does not focus on the actual act of aggression but rather on the consequences of such aggression for the victim. Bullying behaviour results in feelings of anxiety, intimidation, and fear for the victim (Marini et al.). Students who are victimized often report an array of internalizing difficulties related to anxiety, depression, and self-worth as well as a heightened risk of suicide (Craig, 1998; Grills & Ollendick, 2002; Marini & Dane, 2008; Rigby, 2001). Interplay of the first three elements can lead to a negative atmosphere in which the victim greatly fears for personal safety and well-being. For instance, the unilateral power relationship between bully and victim, in which the bully holds greater physical and/or psychological power, typically makes it difficult for the victim to defend her/himself (Olweus, 1999). This can ultimately result in feelings of powerlessness (Marini et al.). In addition, the intent and repeated nature of the bullying behaviour make the victim acutely aware that the abuse is likely to be an ongoing, chronic problem. More precisely, “bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim” (Rigby, 2008, p. 46). Further investigating looking at the bystander role, do these students have the same feelings of fear for personal safety and well-being and powerlessness to stop the continuing aggressive behaviour?

It is abundantly clear that bullying is a serious social and educational problem (Smith & Sharp, 1994), and it might be said that an underrated social problem of childhood (Marini, 1998a; Craig & Pepler, 2000). Most studies indicate that the number of students involved in bullying activities is alarmingly high. Researchers use different instruments to assess the behaviour. Students thought to be involved, either as bullies or victims, are reported to be as high as 40% (Smith & Sharp, 1994). Researchers also point to an increase in such incidents when children move from elementary to middle schools. Toronto's Board of Education has documented that in grades 4 to 8, one child in five was victimized periodically, while 1 in 12 was bullied weekly or daily. However, most studies report that those who are regularly victimized range from 10% to 20% (Pepler & Craig, 1995). Marini et al, 2000, found that 12% of the participants in their study reported being bullied on a regular basis. Most bullying takes place in and around school and is often reinforced by an audience. In one study (Pepler & Craig, 2000), 120 hours of video surveillance in Toronto schools showed that in over 20% of bullying, peers actively reinforced bullying by physically or verbally joining in the aggression. In 54% of cases, they reinforced the bullying by watching but not joining in. In only 25% of cases did peers support the victim (Goldbloom, 2008).

School bullying problems negatively affect the lives of victims, bullies, and bystanders. Significant relationships have been found in research between bullying behaviours and the physical, psychological, and social well-being of children.

Types

While bullying can be defined by the four elements discussed above, it can be manifested in a number of different ways. Despite the variations in terminology used to explain types of bullying behaviour, bullying can be categorized along two main dimensions, namely level of directness and form of aggression (Marini et al., 1999; Salmivalli, 2001).

Bullying includes both direct (physical) aggression and indirect (relational) aggression. Direct bullying includes biting, hair-pulling, hitting, kicking, locking in a room, pinching, punching, pushing, or any form of physical attack. It also includes damaging a person's property. Indirect bullying is nonphysical bullying, which can be verbal and nonverbal. Verbal bullying includes abusive telephone calls or emails, extorting money or material possessions, intimidation or threats of violence, name-calling, racist remarks or teasing, sexually suggestive or abusive language, spiteful teasing or making cruel remarks, and spreading false and malicious rumours. Indirect bullying is manipulative, sneaky, and subtle. Indirect bullying includes manipulating relationships and ruining friendships, purposely and often systematically excluding, ignoring, and isolating someone. It can be argued that both direct and indirect bullying have a psychological dimension. Therefore, bullying includes both direct (physical) aggression and indirect (relational) aggression.

Rigby (2008) states: "It is not uncommon to find published lists of behaviours that are described as bullying behaviours. There is a danger in tying bullying to specified behaviours. It does not follow that hitting people necessarily implies bullying. A child who hits an aggressor back is not necessarily a bully

even if we may wish she or he had reacted differently. Nevertheless it is useful to consider the kinds of behaviours that often figure in actual bullying in schools.” (p. 25). One such classification is given in Figure 1.

Marini et al. (2006) report indirect and direct aggressions are moderately correlated in two recent studies. The literature suggests that each subtype is associated with different possible underlying factors and outcomes, which supports making theoretical distinctions among varieties of bullying. Marini and Dane (2008) state: “Whereas children who bully may well use multiple methods of aggression in perpetrating their attacks, it appears that some children use one type of bullying predominantly (Crick & Dodge, 1996)” (p. 3).

Researchers such as Crick and Bigbee (1998) and Mynard and Joseph (2000) classify bullying as a direct or openly confrontational act (e.g., physical or verbal assaults) and/or indirect or relational acts (e.g., ostracism or social manipulations).

Physical Characteristics of the Three Major Groups of Participants

The literature contains conflicting reports regarding physical characteristics of students involved in bullying behaviours. Olweus (1994) found that physical disabilities (problems with sight, hearing, or speech), obesity, personal hygiene, facial expression, posture, and dress were unrelated to victimization. He reported the only physical characteristic related to victimization was size of the student. Students who were victimized were smaller and weaker than students not involved in bullying behaviour. Contrary to these findings, Lowenstein (1978) found that victims were less attractive and had more odd mannerisms or physical disabilities than nonvictimized students.

Bullying will always include these three elements. The first element is an imbalance of power. The bully may be older, bigger, stronger, more verbally adept, and higher up on the social ladder or a different race or of the opposite sex. The imbalance of power may be as simple as sheer numbers of students banded together to bully. The second element is the intent to harm. The bully means to inflict emotional and/or physical pain, expects the action to hurt, and takes pleasure in witnessing the hurt. And the last element is the threat of further aggression. Both the victim and the bully know that the bullying can and probably will occur again; this is an ongoing event.

Marini et al. (2001) report: "For their part, victims have general issues related to powerlessness, which manifests itself by lack of physical and psychological strength, social isolation, loneliness, insecurity, and low self-esteem (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Olweus, 1993)(p. 179)". One-to-one bullying is the typical cause for concern, but increasingly the literature is reporting different types of bullying taking place such as verbal and emotional bullying, which in many cases is much more difficult to detect and can have just as serious consequences (Boivin, Hymel, & Hodges, 2001).

The third group of participants in bullying situations is the bystanders, the largest group of students. Relatively little is known about this heterogeneous group, which is made up of students who exhibit a variety of behaviours, ranging from followers of the bully, to disengaged onlookers, and to defenders of the victims (Cowie, 2000; Hazler, 1996; Olweus, 2001). Pepler and Craig (1995)

	Direct	Indirect
Verbal	Insulting language Cruel teasing or taunting Name-calling Ridicule	Persuading another person to insult or abuse someone Spreading malicious rumours Anonymous phone calls Offensive text messages and emails
Physical	Striking, kicking Throwing objects Spitting Using a weapon	Deliberately and unfairly excluding someone Removing and hiding belongings
Gestural	Threatening motions Staring fixedly at someone	Repeatedly turning away to show that someone is unwelcome

Figure 1. The means of bullying. One classification of bullying behaviours. (Rigby, 2008).

Note. From *Children and Bullying: how parents and educators can reduce bullying at school* (p. 25), by Ken Rigby, 2008, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. Copyright 2008 by Wiley-Blackwell. Reprinted with permission.

examined the role of the bystander in bullying episodes and observed the following: Peers were involved in some capacity in 85% of the bullying episodes, peers reinforced the bullying in 81% of the episodes, peers were more respectful and friendly toward the bullies than the victims, peers were active participants in 48% of the episodes, and peers intervened in only 13% of the episodes at which they were present. Bystanders have more excuses than valid reasons for not intervening.

Bullying and bystander support for perpetrators have serious consequences for students from marginalized groups such as immigrants or refugees. These students are less likely to complain to faculty because they are new to the school system, do not speak English well, and may be too shy to build a rapport, or their own cultural protocols may require them to maintain deference to authority (Handa, 1997).

The consequences of direct bullying are easily recognizable. Teaching faculty can easily see a black eye, bruises, and broken bones. The stress and anxiety of bullying can also cause physical conditions such as headaches, gastric ailments, and lethargy, but parents and faculty might reasonably assume that the child has a physical illness. Those who fluctuate between bullying and being victimized show the greatest tendency for serious aggression and criminality in adulthood (DiGiulio, 2001).

Bullying creates a climate of fear that makes students feel unsafe. It is important that students recognize that they are responsible for helping to create a safe, caring, respectful, and bully-free environment.

Intrapersonal Functioning of Children

Self-worth, anxiety, depression, student's behavioural characteristics, and gender and age are shown to effect children's intrapersonal function when they are involved in school bullying.

Self-Worth

As with bullying, self-worth is a complex issue both conceptually and methodologically. For the purpose of my research, self-worth refers to the evaluation of the self-concept - namely, whether one feels good or bad generally about one's qualities and attributes (Harter, 1982). Particular events, such as bullying, can produce drastic changes in self-worth (Andreou, 2000; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Grills & Ollendick, 2002). High self-worth is believed to buffer the stress-illness relationship. Those students with high self-worth were less likely to become upset in response to stress- bullying (Andreou).

The literature on bullying behaviours recognizes that children who have been subjected to peer victimization have poor self-worth (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Olweus, 1978; Rigby & Slee, 1993). However, the literature on self-worth is controversial in relation to children who bully. Olweus (1993) claimed that children who bully do not suffer from poor self-worth, although he recognized those passive bullies (followers and henchmen) might be anxious and insecure. Rigby and Slee also reported that the tendency to bully others was not associated with poor self-worth. Pearce and Thompson (1998) also refer to the typical bully as having "good self-worth." Rigby and Slee (1993) argued that "bullying others" might have the effect of

raising self-worth. However Rigby and Cox (1996) found that among teenage girl, but not boys, low levels of self-worth were associated with reported bullying behaviour.

O'Moore (1997) found that children who bully shared with victims' feelings of lower self-worth than children who were not involved in bullying behaviours. Bryne (1994) also reported lower levels of self-worth among primary and postprimary children who either bully others or are victimized. Furthermore, O'Moore reported that the lower levels of self-worth found among primary and postprimary victims and bullies characterized both boys and girls. A further explanation for the controversy in relation to the self-worth of children who bully could be the failure to distinguish between the global self-worth and the multidimensional nature of self-worth. Often, depending on the measure, used the results have varied. Another factor that may contribute to the controversy of the relationship between self-worth and the tendency to bully is the failure to take the typology of bullying behaviour into account. O'Moore found significant differences in personality traits as well as in global and dimensional self-worth when the children were classified into those who only bully and those who also are bullied. The pure bullies (children who only bully) came closer to the typical bully characterized by Olweus (1993) and the ringleaders in Salmivalli's study (2001). However, bullies who reported that they were also bullied harbored significantly more feelings of inadequacy than pure bullies. Furthermore the bullies who were frequent victims were more anxious, less popular, and more unhappy than the bullies who were victimized only occasionally. The high levels of anxiety that characterized the bully-victims were also found by Olweus to distinguish his typical bully from the passive bully, the latter being more anxious.

Victimization also correlates positively with loneliness (Juvonen & Graham, 2001) and negatively with self-worth (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001). While some studies described this relation as causation, with peer victimization as a cause of children's subsequent loneliness (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996) and diminished self-worth (Egan & Perry, 1998), these changes also may represent consequence. Egan and Perry, who assessed students at two points in time to determine the reciprocal nature of this relationship, concluded that "poor self-concept may play a central role in a vicious cycle that perpetuates and solidifies a child's status as a victim of peer abuse" (p. 299).

Bandura's (1997) social learning theory has become central to such concepts as "self-esteem" and "self-worth." At a more applied level, clinicians, educators, and program-evaluation researchers are interested in the assessment and enhancement of an individual's self-worth.

As educators, we acknowledge the crucial role of self-worth and its effects on learning and life. Secure self-worth gives learners confidence, energy, and enthusiasm and an ability to value their efforts and achievements. Self-worth has been identified as a developmental precursor to anxious symptoms in children. Really it is a basic human right.

Bullying has been reported in studies to be associated with lower self-worth. According to Susan Harter (1982), she expresses children 8 years of age and older are able to evaluate their overall global self-worth. Several studies have used this conceptualization of global self-worth and have found peer victimization to be associated with lower self-worth (Andreou, 2000; Callahan & Joseph, 1995; Grills &

Ollendick, 2002; Neary & Joseph, 1994; Rigby, 2001). Harter's scale has been used to measure the reporting of increased victimization and reported lower levels of self-worth. Also, Rigby reports the peer victimization lowers the self-worth relation.

Craig (2000) hypothesizes that "perceived general self-worth in adulthood is uniquely related to having or not having a mutual friendship in preadolescence" (p. 88). This hypothesis is grounded in theoretical conceptualizations of the significance of preadolescent friendship. H. Sullivan (1953) contends that this friendship has long-term implications for a person's feelings of competence and self-worth. This sense of self-worth that results from friendships has importance throughout the stages of one's life and promotes successful coping in school transitions and puberty.

It is clear from the studies reported in this paper that there are both similarities and differences to be found in relation to studied self-worth and bully/victim problems. It is possible that the differences found between the studies are due more to variation in sample size, age of sample, criteria used to classify children, and the measurement employed to assess self-worth than to any real differences in relationship found between self-worth and the participants in bullying incidents.

We assess our self-worth by judging ourselves in relation to our internalized self and by looking outside ourselves in order to make comparisons. We seek to protect and maintain our self-worth and personality traits. Frequently, self-worth affects our other traits, such as anxiety.

Anxiety

For the purpose of this study, I define anxiety as a state of being uneasy, apprehensive, or worried about what may happen. This definition is further supported

by Morris Rosenberg (1965), suggesting that anxiety is manifested by: "(a) interference with thinking processes and concentration, (b) a frequently object-less feeling of uncertainty and helplessness, (c) intellectual and emotional preoccupation, and (d) blocking of communication" (p. 149).

The existence of a significant relationship between bullying and various forms of psychological distress is generally supported and reported in past research. Rigby (2002) reports "acute anxiety states experienced by children after being bullied at school" (p. 316). Other studies support his findings as well as a greater incidence of physical complaints among victimized children (Grills & Ollendick, 2002; Juvonen & Graham, 2001).

It is not surprising that children who report victimization by their peers develop symptoms of anxiety. The symptoms of anxiety are identified at the time of peer bullying as well as later in life (Grills et al., 2002 & Olweus, 1993). Grills and Ollendick cite a study in their research that examined relations between a history of being teased and adult internalizing symptoms in a large number of college students. Retrospectively adults report trait anxiety, social anxiety, and depression as a response to being bullied during childhood.

The relationship between victimization and anxiety is clear: students who were bullied were 3.2 to 4.2 times more likely to report anxiety symptoms compared to noninvolved children (Salmon, James, & Smith, 1998). Victims report higher levels of anxiety. Craig (1998) found that children who had been victimized reported significantly greater social anxiety than bullies or children who had been neither bullies nor victims. While the research on anxiety in bullies remains inconclusive

(Salmon et al.), students classified as both bullied and victims were 6.4 times more likely to suffer symptoms of anxiety compared to noninvolved students (Salmon et al.).

Other children often exclude students who are bullied; hence the bullied child lacks in social interaction and the forming of friendships. The bullied child has feelings of incompetence and unattractiveness in the school community. Does this difficulty of forming a good relationship lead to a less successful life for years to come? Does the feeling of lower self-worth cause the student to suffer academically even though they may have the capacity to do better scholastically?

Marini et al. (1999) report, "In cases where greater physical or psychological power is repeatedly abused, the experience of bullying can create a sense of fear, anxiety, and intimidation in the victims. Bullying will not sort itself out naturally or spontaneously" (p. 37).

Depression

Research has investigated psychosocial characteristics of bullies, victims, and bystanders. Such research found that children involved in bullying episodes are at risk for a variety of mental health problems, the most common problem being depression. Compared to students not involved in bullying behaviour, bullies were 2.8 to 4.3 times more likely (Salmon et al., 1998) and victims 4 times more likely (Bond, Carlin, Thomas, Rubin, & Patton, 2001) to suffer from depressive symptoms. Both boys and girls who are victimized report symptoms of depression, such as sadness and loss of interest in activities (Craig, 1998).

Behavioural Characteristics

There has been a substantial body of literature investigating the relations between bullying and behavioural misconduct. Behavioural misconduct usually consists of problem behaviours such as conduct problems in school, physical fighting, weapon carrying, theft, property damage, substance abuse, cheating and breaking the law.

Comparing bullies to a student not involved in bullying behaviour, bullies were significantly more likely to become involved in self-destructive behaviours such as alcohol abuse, tobacco use, and fighting (Baldry & Farrington, 2000). Significant relationships also existed with bullying others and weapon carrying, cheating on tests (Berthold & Hoover, 2000), stealing, and vandalism (Baldry & Farrington., 2000). Being a victim also related positively to misconduct, with students who were both bullies and victims most likely to misbehave (Haynie, Nansel, & Eitel, 2001).

Gender and Age

Patterns have emerged with respect to the variables of gender and age. According to Smith et al. (1999), regardless of certain cultural differences, many countries have reported similar trends concerning bullying within schools.

Studies have examined gender differences in bullying. Keith Sullivan (2001) reports that Adair's study (1999) showed boys perpetrated 76% of the bullying incidents. The literature confirms that boys are more likely than girls to be involved in direct physical and more overt bullying (Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Olweus, 1994) and that boys and girls are equally likely to become involved in direct verbal bullying (Baldry & Farrington). However, little consensus exists in the literature regarding

gender differences with indirect and more covert bullying, such as social exclusion and subjecting to rumours (Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Olweus, 1994; Peterson & Rigby, 1999).

In regard to who bullies whom, several gender differences exist. Boys generally are bullied by boys but not by girls. Girls reported being bullied by both genders equally. Rigby and Slee (1991) found that when boys reported being bullied, 69% of the time it was by a boy and 3.9% by a girl, and 27.1% sometimes by a boy and sometimes by a girl. For girls who were the victims of bullies, 24.1% reported that this was always by a boy, 24.5% always by a girl, and 51.4% sometimes by a boy and/or girl. Regardless of the type of bullying, girls and boys are involved in all types, warranting extensive study, as they can be equally devastating to the victim (Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Rachael Simmons (2002) writes about the word bully evoking the image of an enemy. Yet she has found, listening to girls, that bully is often an intimate, "closest girlfriend who is caught in protracted episodes of emotional abuse" (p. 49).

Three developmental trends are most evident in bullying research. The first age-related trend is that boys are more involved in bullying than girls across all age groups (Craig, Peters, & Konarski, 1998; Rigby, 1997). Second, as children become older, there is a decrease in the number of reports on being bullied (Charach, Pepler, & Ziegler, 1995; Kumpulainen & Räsämä, 2000; O'Connell et al., 1999; Rigby). Third, it has been found that as children get older, their attitudes and beliefs appear to become more supportive of bullying (O'Connell et al.; Rigby). While the second trend may simply reveal that bullying decreases with age, it may actually be that children

are less willing to report being victims of bullying for reasons of embarrassment, fear, or the code of silence of residential life. If the latter reason is correct, the existence of the second developmental trend coupled with the third trend clearly points to the need for early and effective antibullying programs within schools.

Peer Relationships

Probably the most intuitive finding pertaining to interpersonal relationships found that students who were rated by other students as popular or who scored higher on a measure of social acceptance were less likely to be bullied by other students (Mynard & Joseph, 2000). A student not involved in bullying at all and bullies record the same level of social acceptance. Peer affiliation is essential for the establishment of positive self-worth and a sense of belonging in a relationship. Children will obtain the peer affiliation they need, regardless of whether such an alliance is healthy. Contact with a peer group, any peer group, is that powerful a force in the life of adolescents. The strongest relationships are formed when a connection of value and worth is transmitted between individuals. This is called bonding. Bonding does not have to be based on positive events or activities. Where and from whom children obtain their sense of self-worth and are told that they are valuable is where and with whom they bond.

Bullying others has been related to the impact on future relationships (Connolly, Pepler, Craig, & Taradash, 2000). Children who bully others begin dating at a younger age and their relationships often evolve at a more advanced level than peers. Bullies also report more acts of physical and social aggression toward their dating partners (Connolly et al.).

Ethnicity

Racist bullying is where racism and bullying meet. It is an abuse of power involving psychological or physical bullying or both to demean or cause harm. Racial abuse directed at oneself may not be perceived as bullying. When members of the ethnic minority community reflect on the personal experience of members of the ethnic minority communities as a whole, they are fully aware of the many negative personal interactions they are subjected to by the majority community; and because of this knowledge, they are likely to also perceive them as subject to more bullying as well. The most common form of racist bullying is name-calling, which is widely experienced by ethnic minority children. When comparing racial or ethnic groups in the prevalence of bullying or being bullied, studies from the United Kingdom found no significant differences between racial or ethnic groups (Siann, Callahan, Lockhart, & Rawson, 1993; Whitney & Smith, 1993). A cross-national study including students from Germany and England found a weak but significant relationship between ethnicity and bullying, with ethnic minorities more likely to become victims of bullying (Wolke, Woods, Stanford, & Schultz, 2001).

School Environment and Academic Issues

As is the case with the study of general childhood aggression, it is believed that a multitude of interactive factors promote the development and maintenance of bullying behaviours (Griffiths, 1995; Marini et al., 1999; Pepler, Craig, & O'Connell, 1999). These interdependent factors can consist of both individual characteristics and situational/environmental influences (Boulton & Smith, 1994; Craig et al., 1998).

Individual characteristics that may impact the development and maintenance of bullying include low empathy (Slee & Rigby, 1993), difficult temperament, psychotic personality traits (Mynard & Joseph, 2000), and acting out in other antisocial ways (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Craig et al., 1998). Due to the cross-sectional, nonexperimental nature of much of the research on individual characteristics, drawing causative conclusions is controversial. What is evident, though, is that such individual characteristics are clearly correlated to bullying behaviours among school children (Rigby & Slee, 1993).

With respect to environmental/situational factors, the school (Rigby, 1996), community (Randall, 1996), media (Olweus, 1993), and family (Craig et al., 1998) are all believed to impact social behaviour. First, the family is known to be a very powerful early socializing agent for the development of bullying behaviours (Craig et al.; Schwartz, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1997).

Sourander, Helstela, Helenius, & Piha (2000) found that parental level of education, socioeconomic status, and family compositions (intact/divorced/remarried) were not significantly associated with either bullying or victimization. However, Wolke et al. (2001) found a significant relationship: Children of lower socioeconomic status were more likely than nonlow socioeconomic students to become involved in bullying others or being the victim of bullying. Bond et al. (2001) found that victimized children were 1.5 times more likely to come from separated or divorced families than from intact families, thereby contradicting Sourander et al.'s findings. Olweus (1993) indicates that some of the main parenting factors which contribute to bullying behaviours are lack of warmth, little involvement in the lives of their

children, lack of limits on aggressive behaviour, and the poor role of modeling of conflict management strategies. Furthermore, in Farrington's (1993) study, father-son generational bullying links were found. His empirical data indicated that fathers who bullied at school have a greater likelihood of having sons who bully at school.

Children from harsh home environments engage in more bullying behaviours (as bullies and/or victims) than children from nurturing home environments (Shields & Cicchetti, 2001). Maternal hostility represents a significant predictor of later peer victimization for the child. The number of personal friendships of the student mediated this prediction of peer victimization. Children from harsh home environments who had numerous friendships were less likely to suffer peer victimization than students with few personal friends.

In addition to personal and family realms, school bullying also relates to academic and school issues. A school's characteristics such as class size or school size are not related to bullying behaviour in students (Whitney & Smith, 1993); school characteristics of the student are related. Studies concur that relationship exists between bullying behaviours and academic competence but are not consistent in their findings. Other studies investigated school-related issues such as school adjustment (doing well on schoolwork, following rules, doing homework) and school bonding (desire to do well at school, being happy at school, taking school seriously); (Haynie et al., 2001). Students involved in school bullying were significantly less likely to reflect high levels of school adjustment or bonding. This relationship was strongest for bully/victims, followed by bullies, then by victims. Natvig, Albrektsen, and Qvarnstrom (2001), who investigated these same concepts "from a glass is half

empty" perspective, found that school alienation (opposite of school bonding) related to students who bullied others, but school distress (opposite of school adjustment) was not related. Bullies were 2.1 times more likely than students not involved in bullying behaviour to feel alienated from school. Student adjustment and bonding also were associated with school performance.

With respect to the school environment, Craig et al. (2000) and Pepler et al. (1999) believe the social context of the school plays a role in the promotion and maintenance of bullying behaviours.

Garbarino and DeLara (2002) make claim that emotional violence is just as deadly as physical and sexual violence. Children who are unmercifully teased, put down, threatened, and ridiculed daily give up trying to do their best in school. The authors' research was particularly enlightening in revealing how nasty rumors and vicious attributions can destroy the emotional well-being of youngsters and their safety. They go on to say even those students who are not directly bullied or hurt but who witness such behaviours are filled with anxiety and shame when they witness someone else being bullied. They feel increasingly unsafe.

Maslow's (1970) model is useful for explaining some of the possible effects of bullying. For children who are bullied, their safety needs have not been met. They spend much of their time trying to avoid further bullying either by escaping the bullies or by finding places in the school that feel safer. If the child is being emotionally bullied, excluded, or isolated, then they are being denied the opportunity to socialize, make friends and experience a "normal school life experience." They are being denied

access to the relationship growth that leads to the development of social intelligence. It might also mean they are being denied access to full cognitive development.

Educational Practice

Children tend not to report bullying and/or victimization due to being at greater risk for associated problems. (Craig & Pepler, 2003). Adair (1999) found in a New Zealand based study that although 81% of students in the study had observed bullying, only 21% reported the bullying incident to an adult in the student's community. Why is this? Bullying is often driven underground "hidden curriculum" in the school community. The victims are left with feelings of powerlessness being and isolated or even trapped. Do they feel safe in this community?

Nicolaides et al. (2002) summarize generally findings from a survey in English schools. Students report being a victim at least "sometimes" during a semester around 10 to 27%, and of taking part in bullying others at least "sometimes" around 6 to 12%. Boys are more numerous in the bully category by a factor of 3:1; but the sexes are relatively equal in the victim category. The proportion of self-reported victims who say that they have told an adult in the school community about the bullying is only 30 to 50%. Most students (60%) say they don't like bullying; some are neutral, and around 20% report they would join in bullying.

Students who report bullying are all looking for psychological and emotional safety with someone that offers them trust, respect, confidentiality, and assistance. The entire school staff must become familiar with the signals and signs that identify the students involved in bullying tactics.

K. Sullivan (2001) states: "A single sign may be nothing more than a temporary aberration, a passing mood or, in the case of teenagers, a symptom of adolescent angst. But if several of these symptoms occur together, then it is very possible that bullying is taking place" (p. 29).

The question of how bullying and harassment can be most effectively reduced must be asked in the education community. The literature supports the belief that planned interventions in school communities can be successful. It is well-known fact that the "whole-school approach" is required to bring about reductions in bullying. All school staff, including teaching faculty, house staff, maintenance, and health professionals in a private school must be committed and act together in a planned, agreed-upon strategy to counter bullying. Students themselves as well as parents play a pivotal role in the process as well.

Olweus, Marini, and Rigby have all provided useful information and strategies to deal with symptoms of bullying. The following is a brief overview of what students, parents, and school staff should be looking for daily.

K. Sullivan (2001) in *The Anti-bullying Handbook* suggests some useful interventions and strategies. Parents in their own homes should observe their adolescent, for the following: anxious about going to school; complaints of health concerns (e.g. repeated morning tummy aches, headaches, signs of increased anxiety levels); student personal property being repeatedly lost or damaged; unexplained and suspicious personal injuries; sadness from phone conversations; lack of friends or changes in friendship relationships; lack of social invitations that often have feeling of sadness attached; symptoms of depression; change in study habits lack of

concentration; and a change in the character of the adolescent. After completion of my study, I hope to take the data back to the private school and, with the dissemination of the data develop, strategies with the community to lessen bullying at the private school.

Staff of a school must become well informed about the nature and quality of peer relations in their school community. The entire staff of the school must be involved. Maintenance and housekeeping staff often will recognize many cues in their daily work in the school setting. Awareness of the problem will generate many innovative methods to resolve and address the issue seriously.

Some cues that school staff may become aware of are: a lot of negative attention and teasing directed at a student; students alone at activities such as eating lunch alone in the dining hall; skipping meals in the dining hall or regularly failing to sign in for meals in the dining hall; chosen last on sports teams or classroom groups; students will not participate in class or a change in the participation level of a student in a classroom; change in work habits and work output; a student that is clearly unhappy, distressed, and withdrawn (Brown, Birch, & Kancherla, 2005); a student who gets blamed for a happening and you find it difficult to believe that this student would be involved.

Summary of Literature Review and Present Study

Empirical studies suggest a relation exists between children's bullying experiences and self-worth perceptions. This is supported in the work done by Grills and Ollendick (2002), Olewus (1993, 1999), Marini et al., (1999), Marini and Dane, (2008). In the literature review, students who are involved in the bullying, victim, and

bystander roles reported an array of internalizing difficulties related to anxiety, depression and self-worth. During a workday while the health team were doing health assessments of the children and listening to their voices, it became apparent that there was a concern regarding children's bullying experiences and the self-worth perceptions of the students. After reading the obituary of the famous actor, I felt further supported in their assessment. Time, some 80 years, has marched on since this individual was a student at the private school; however the variables of bullying and one's self-worth have remained alive. Students enrolled at the private school must meet a predetermined academic standard, be able to participate in a varsity sport or an arts program and participate in a community service program as well as having the financial backing to meet the tuition costs. The school is represented by 34 countries, with the majority of the students living at the private school for the school year. In light of the aforementioned literature, this study explores the relation between children's bullying experiences and their self-worth perceptions in a private school.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This chapter examines the research methodology for this study, including details on research design, selection of subjects, research procedures, and methodological assumptions and limitations. As well, the methods of data collection, recording, analysis, and interpretation are discussed.

Research Methodology

The present study is a mixed method research design, a procedure for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study and analyzing and reporting these data based on a priority and sequence of information (Creswell, 2002). Mixed method designs are procedures for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study concurrently and for analyzing and reporting these data based on priority, sequence and level of integration of information. By using mixed methodology, the researcher combines both forms of data to best explain and explore the relation among the studied variables. The data collected will provide a complete picture of the research problem. The best understanding of a problem emerges from using both quantitative (e.g., generalizable) as well as qualitative (e.g., in-depth, contextual) data. Relying on self-report questionnaire methodology, this study addressed the relations between bullying experiences and the students' perceptions of self-worth in their private school as well as exploring the school-aged children's perceptions of private school bullying experiences. Much of the research on the topic of bullying and self-worth has relied on similar methodologies. Studies have typically used self-report questionnaires and/or interviews in order to collect data for the variables of study (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001). According to Pellegrini (1998), self-

report methodology is valuable, as it provides researchers with insider perspectives on bullying.

With respect to the assessment of bullying behaviours, although Pepler and her colleagues greatly advocate the use of naturalistic observation for the assessment of bullying, such a technique was not viewed as feasible for the present study. This technique requires not only the use of video cameras, remote microphones, and pocket-size transmitters, but also the hiring of trained observers (Craig et al., 2000). Therefore, this study relied on a children's self-report questionnaire to assess children's bullying experiences and perceived self-worth.

Research Design

In considering an appropriate research design for this study of exploring school-aged children's perceptions of school bullying experiences in a private school and examining the relation among bullying experiences and the students' perceived self-worth, it is important to outline the basic characteristic differences between qualitative research and quantitative research. LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998), "qualitative research involves broadly stated questions about human experiences and realities, studied through sustained contact with people in their natural environments, generating rich, descriptive data that help us to understand their experiences" (p. 254). "Quantitative research is grounded by beliefs that humans are a composite of many body systems that can be objectively measured, one at a time or in combination" (p. 255).

The design of the study is a mixed methodology (both quantitative and qualitative analysis). Mixed method designs are procedures for collecting both

quantitative and qualitative data in a single study and for analyzing and reporting the data based on priority, sequence, and level of integration of information. By using mixed methodology, the researcher is able to combine both forms of data simultaneously to best explore school-aged children's perceptions of school bullying experiences and examine the relation among bullying experiences and the students' perceived self-worth in a private school. Qualitative research is recognized and appreciated by more and more educators, and with quantitative research long-established as an approach, mixed method research was utilized in this study.

The general question underlying this empirical investigation is to examine children's self-reported perceptions of bullying experiences (as bully, victim, and bystander) and their perceived self-worth.

The main hypotheses being tested is: It was predicted that students' perceptions of self-worth would differ across the various roles of being a victim, bystander, and bully.

Participant Selection

The data were collected from a sample of 40 grade 7 and 8 students in one private school in Ontario, Canada. The sample consisted of 15 students (13 males, 2 females) from grade 7 and 25 students (9 males, 16 females) from grade 8. In total, 22 males (55%) and 18 females (45%) made up this study sample.

The participants of this study were chosen using convenience sampling. In convenience sampling the researcher selects participants because they are willing available to be studied. The researcher cannot say with confidence that the participants are representative of the population because the participants have not been

systematically selected. However, the sample can provide useful information for answering the research questions and hypotheses. Despite some of the drawbacks traditionally associated with this type of sampling, it was believed that a sample representative of the population was obtained, and thus the technique would produce valuable findings. The private school has a student population representing 34 countries around the world. In this study the participants represented are 53% from Canada and 47% were from other countries (USA, Ukraine, Korea, Taiwan, Bermuda, Mexico, Jamaica, Germany, Taiwan, Hungary, Holland, Bahamas). It is to be noted that 40% of the students in the study are boarding students and the remaining 60% are day students at the private school. Thus the sample is believed to represent a cross-section of the population of the private school.

Although socioeconomic data were not collected on individual students, it should be noted that each student pays tuition to attend the private school. That in itself is indicative these children reside primarily in upper income families.

Measures

Each participant completed a pencil and paper self-report questionnaire. All participants, regardless of grade, were surveyed using the same questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into seven parts but administered simultaneously.

A mixed methodology self-report questionnaire based on the work of Zopito Marini's *Modified School-Life Questionnaire* (1998b) and Susan Harter's *Perceived Competence Scale for Children* (1982) was used to examine the relations among bullying behaviours and the students' perceived self-worth in a private school as well as explore school-aged children's perceptions of school bullying. See Appendix C.

The questionnaire was designed to measure bullying behaviours. Specifically, the focus was on assessing involvement in bullying behaviours. It is important to note that both the basic structure and content of the questionnaire were largely based on bullying literature and research. Many bullying researchers have followed a survey approach in which student self-reports were relied upon for insights into bullying (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Rigby & Slee, 1993; Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1996). As stated previously, student self-reports of bullying are highly valuable as they provide an "insider perspective" to the problem (Pellegrini, 1998).

The adjusted *Modified School Life Questionnaire* (Marini, 1998) was used for data collection. Students reported how often during the last school year they had experienced direct and indirect victimization (Marini et al., 2006). Direct bullying questions were further analyzed into physical and cognitive behaviours: pushing and shoving, a group of students picking on someone, demanding and taking things from others, one student daring another to hurt someone, kicking and hitting, and a gang of students picking fights. Bullying questions that are indirect (social and emotional) were: name-calling and swearing, excluding someone from joining an activity, teasing and ridiculing, spreading rumours and untrue stories, threatening and intimidating, and writing hurtful and unsigned notes. An analysis of the questionnaire, Part 1 through Part 4, was conducted in order to determine the percentage of participants who selected each of the possible Likert scale responses for each questionnaire item. This scale aimed to assess involvement in bullying others, victimization, observing bullying, and how wrong bullying would be in your culture. Possible responses on a

5-point Likert scale ranged from *never* (circle 0 for 0 times), *rarely* (circle 1 for 1-2 times), *sometimes* (circle 3 for 3-4 times), *often* (circle 5 for 5-6 times), and *very often* (circle 7 for 7 or more times).

Part 5 of the questionnaire was an extension of adjusted Modified School Life Questionnaire using a similar Likert scale. This section examined 12 questions in regard to school-life in the past year. The questions were asked:

- 1) How often do you feel happy at school?
- 2) How often have you seen students bring weapons to school?
- 3) How often have you seen vandalism at school?
- 4) How often do you think students get bullied because they are different?
- 5) How often do you think students get bullied because of their race?
- 6) How often do you feel safe at school?
- 7) How often do you feel sad at school?
- 8) How many friends do you have at school?
- 9) How often do you eat lunch alone at school?
- 10) How often do you feel different from other students in the school?
- 11) If you are bullied, do you feel anxious?
- 12) Do you feel a part of this private school community?

The *Perceived Competence Scale for Children* (Harter, 1982) was used for further data collection. The children reported their sense of general self-worth. Seven questions, in Part 6 regarding the participant's self-worth used a two measure scale of *really true* and *sort of true*. Items on this subscale make reference to being sure of oneself, being happy with the way one is, feeling good about the way one acts, and

thinking that one is a good person. Harter has reported acceptable internal consistency coefficients ranging from .78 to .84.

The open-ended questions in Part 7 provided an opportunity for the children to share some of their insights into their understanding of the bullying at the private school they attended. The children were able to identify areas where bullying occurred, how they would handle bullying if it occurred, definition of bullying, why girls and boys were bullied, how to stop bullying, and finally how they felt about bullying.

Procedures and Data Collection

Once permission was obtained from the Research Ethics Board with Human Participants and the Director of Middle School at the private school, a meeting was set up between the researcher and the administration to establish an appropriate date and time to administer the adjusted Modified School-Life Questionnaire.

The researcher met with the teaching faculty of the five classes of grade 7 and 8 students. Each faculty member was asked to attach a cover letter and an informed consent form to the students' agenda the following day. The cover letter explained to the participants' parents the research project and requested their permission to include their child in the study. For the boarding students, their housemasters sent the information to parents electronically via their previously established e-mail system. Only those students who returned the consent form signed by their parents participated in the study.

The researcher conducted the actual administration of the questionnaire. The administration took place in the dining hall following the student lunch meal. Due to

time constraints of the class schedule, a maximum time of 30 minutes was used for the completion of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered in group format to the 40 participants with signed parental consent. The participants were given an opportunity to withdraw from the research project immediately before the distribution of the questionnaire. Administration of the questionnaire occurred only once to maintain as much consistency as possible.

At the time of the administration, the Assistant Head Master asked the participating students to remain in the dining hall after the lunch announcements. The researcher greeted the students following the Assistant Head Master's announcements. The students were instructed not to place any identifying information on the questionnaires to ensure confidentiality. The researcher administered preliminary instructions by stating the following:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out about your school-life: things such as social relationships, discipline, and safety. I would like to know what your experience has been as an observer, participant, and recipient of some of these behaviours in the past year. I would also like to know your ideas and suggestions as to what we can do about these concerns. Please do not put your name on this paper. Read the questions carefully and answer them honestly and to the best of your ability.

The explicit instructions were created to minimize possible confounding variables which may have arisen during the administration of the questionnaire.

To minimize any test anxiety, the researcher reminded the subjects that this questionnaire was not related to academic achievement and would remain

confidential. Subjects were asked to raise their hand when they had completed, and the researcher collected the questionnaire. At the end of the 30 minutes, the researcher collected all of the questionnaires to be scored and analyzed.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing and analysis was dependent on the number of participants in the study. The researcher believed that the study might have a reduced number of participants due to the fact the students' families live around the globe. The global distribution of the students' parents might cause difficulty in obtaining a timely consent. However, this did not present as much of a challenge as the researcher thought due to the ability to communicate with all parents electronically through an established e-mail system.

To analyze the quantitative data, various statistical tests were used. The data were inputted onto a grid to create an SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) for Windows database. The information obtained from this study was used not only to describe the characteristics of the participants in the study but also to infer a composite picture of the population of the private school. Thus, the data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. For instance, descriptive analyses such as means, frequencies, and ranges were calculated. In addition, inferential statistics such as independent samples *t* tests and Pearson *r* correlation were also conducted.

Qualitative questions are open-ended and nondirectional in nature and seek a description of the phenomenon being addressed. The qualitative open-ended questions provided an opportunity for the participants to share some of their insights into their understanding of the bullying behaviour. I began to look at the data by

reading all the transcriptions carefully. Then I started a process of coding (Creswell, 2002), which is segmenting and labeling text to form a description or themes for the data. I then looked for overlapping themes from the coding process. This began to narrow the data down into a few themes. A summary of the students' insights was categorized. The students' suggestions on ways to stop bullying behaviours in their private school were summarized for future consideration for formulating interventions and strategies for the private school.

Methodological Assumptions and Limitations

This study aimed to explore the children's school bullying experiences and self-worth perceptions within one private school in Ontario, Canada. The questionnaire and information obtained could be adapted and used in other private schools; however, the results of the study should be viewed as restrictive and should not be generalized as typical of all students undergoing a similar experience. The results of this study may be of interest to other private schools and suggest opportunities for further research; they should not be taken as categorical for all. It is important to note that all students are different and private schools can vary dramatically in policy, culture, and student enrollment.

Although there has been an increase in research and related scholarship on bullying in recent years, a number of areas need further study. There is some agreement in regard to the definition of "bullying." However, this is rather broad and tends to include a wide range of aggressive behaviours. As a result, behavioural references may vary considerably from one study to another, resulting in the possibility of inaccurate comparisons across research studies. A clearer and more

specific definition of bullying needs to be developed. Direct and indirect forms of bullying need to be defined in regards to the operations associated with each.

An analysis of the methodology revealed that certain limitations must be acknowledged. For each of the limitations, certain techniques and procedures were employed to minimize and control for the possible effects of the threats.

The first possible threat to internal validity involved subject effects. This threat refers to changes in students that may have occurred in response to their involvement in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). Due to the nature of the variables in this research, the self-report questionnaire required students to reveal beliefs, as well as behaviours that are generally regarded as antisocial. There is a possibility that students may have wanted to appear positive and "socially desirable," and thus they may have responded untruthfully. Despite such drawbacks, the benefit of gaining the insider perspective was believed to outweigh these limitations.

Nevertheless, techniques were implemented to control for this possible participant effect. All students were asked to respond as honestly as possible to the items presented in the questionnaire. It was also made clear to the students that the questionnaires were to remain anonymous and that their individual answers would be confidential. It was reviewed with the children that this was not school-work. Finally, the students were also made aware that there are neither right nor wrong answers and that no marks were assigned to the questionnaire.

The second possible threat to validity involved the questionnaire method of data collection. It is limited, however, by their inability to identify the complex, multilevel processes underlying bullying interactions and by the students' ability to

accurately report on the phenomenon of bullying. The behaviours of the student cannot be recorded first-hand as they occur; hence external validity is lessened. Second the researcher is not able to observe all students (bullying student, victim, observers, and faculty) of the bullying incident. Future research needs to employ multimethods such as interviews, questionnaires, and observations.

Third the sample is limited in that only two grades from one private school were considered in this study. Therefore, the findings may not be able to be generalized to students in other school settings who reside in other geographic settings.

Finally, the participants all knew me as the researcher. Steps I took to minimize this threat were to assure the participants that the questionnaire did not contain their names and I would keep all the information confidential in my office. I also reinforced that they were the experts with the knowledge and would be teaching me.

Bullying research is a relatively young field of study where great progress has been made in recent years. As a result of this research, there is now an increased awareness of the negative effect bullying has on children's psychosocial adjustment as well as recognition on the part of school faculty and health care team members that there is a need for interventions.

Ethical Considerations

A letter explaining the research project and the consent form were e-mailed or sent home in each student's agenda to all students in grades 7 and 8 at the private school. Students with parent-signed consent were allowed to participate in the study.

Before starting the questionnaire, each student was given the opportunity to make an informed choice of their own to participate in the study or not. A set of instructions was read to all students, and following completion of the questionnaire a debriefing of the questionnaire was read to all participants.

The student, while completing the questionnaire, may have entered a reflective process; this process might have caused the student to require some support for their reflections.

If the students required psychological/emotional support due to being involved in this study, the private school has a Health Centre to support the students' needs. The student can come on her/his own accord or be referred to the Health Centre. Students find the school Health Centre a safe and comforting place where they can talk about difficult issues such as teasing and bullying. School health team members can play an instrumental role in facilitating strategies to assist students. Each participant, with the assistance of the health care team, will develop an individualized plan of care. In developing the individualized plan of care the professional staff will remain sympathetic and an active listener and the first consideration will be to help the participant help her/himself.

Summary

Chapter Three examines the research methodology for the study and includes a research design, description of subjects, research procedure, and methodological assumptions and limitations. Data collection, recording, analysis, and interpretation are discussed.

Chapter Four summarizes the data collected in this study using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) as well as a process of coding of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire each student completed.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The research data were collected and summarized using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS); as well, the open-ended questions in the questionnaire were coded and analyzed. Each participant completed a questionnaire on the same day after they finished their lunch in the dining hall.

Preliminary Analyses: Profile of the Sample

The sample of this study consisted of 40 middle school children from a private school. All children with a parent-signed consent participated in the study. As indicated in Table 1, the sample has been divided and initially analyzed in terms of grade, age, gender, boarding/day student, and attendance at the private school the previous year to provide a more comprehensive profile of the sample. With respect to grade, two grades were represented in the sample. Grade 7 children made up 37.5% of the sample, and grade 8 students made up 62.5% of the sample.

In regard to the age of the sample, the sample was divided into four age categories. Eleven-year-olds comprised 2.5% of the sample, 12-year-olds comprised 17.5%, 13-year-olds comprised 60% of the sample, and 14-year-olds comprised 20% of the sample.

Fifty-five percent of the participants were male and forty-five% were female students.

Participants who reside at the school (boarding students) comprised 37.5% of the participants, while 60% of the participants were day students (residing in their own homes), and 2.5% of the participants did not indicate if they were boarding or day students.

Table 1

Profile of the Sample

Category	Subcategory	<i>n</i>	%
Grade	7	15	37.5
	8	25	62.5
Age	11	1	2.5
	12	7	17.5
	13	24	60.0
	14	8	20.0
Gender	Male	22	55.0
	Female	18	45.0
Living arrangements	Boarding	15	37.5
	Day	24	60.0
	No response	1	2.5
Citizenship	Canadian	21	53.0
	Non-Canadian	19	47.0
School attendance previous year	At private school	20	50.0
	Another school	20	50.0

The participants represented 12 countries, 53% from Canada and 47% from other countries.

In the last category, attendance at the school last year, 50% of the total sample attended the private school the previous school year; hence 50% of the participants at the private school began this school year.

Preliminary Analysis: Range of Responses

Each of the items in Parts 1 through 7 of the questionnaire was analyzed using mean and standard deviation of the answers. For this descriptive analysis of each of the items in the first six sections of the questionnaire, refer to Appendix D.

Qualitative data analysis of the open-ended questions was summarized according to common themes as reported by the participants regarding the participants' understanding of bullying, its causes, and possible intervention strategies.

Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation

Analyses were conducted to determine the involvement of the bystander, the bullied, and the bully, as indicated in Table 2. Specifically, Part 1 of the questionnaire was analyzed in order to determine the involvement of the bystander. Part 2 of the questionnaire was analyzed in order to determine the prevalence of bullying other children. The prevalence of the bully was analyzed in Part 3. Part 4 of the questionnaire was analyzed in order to determine the involvement of culture in bullying. Part 5 of the questionnaire was analyzed in order to determine the effect of school-life in the past year. As indicated previously, Part 1 through Part 5 of the questionnaire asked participants how often they had been involved in certain events

Table2

Descriptive Statistics and Standard Deviation-Bystander, Victim, Bully, Culture, and School-Life

	<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
<u>Part 1: Bystander</u>					
Pushing	40	.00	7.00	4.58	2.04
Name calling	40	1.00	7.00	5.30	1.67
Teasing	40	.00	7.00	4.70	2.32
Rumours	40	.00	7.00	4.78	2.29
<u>Part 2: Recipient</u>					
Name calling	39	.00	7.00	3.13	2.46
<u>Part 4: Bullying in your culture</u>					
Daring to hurt	40	.00	7.00	4.08	2.29
Kicking	40	1.00	7.00	4.40	1.93
Threatening	37	.00	7.00	4.49	2.08
Gang fights	40	1.00	7.00	4.75	1.93
<u>Part 5: School-life</u>					
Feel happy	40	.00	7.00	4.70	2.13
Sad	38	.00	7.00	5.11	2.44
Alone	40	.00	7.00	5.93	1.94

regarding bullying in the past year. The possible response categories were never (0), *rarely* (1), *sometimes* (3), *often* (5), or *very often* (7). An item score of 1 (*never*) or 2 (*rarely*) indicated no involvement in the area of analysis, while 3 (*sometimes*), 5 (*often*) or 7 (*very often*) indicated involvement in the area being analyzed.

Since a score of at least 3 (*sometimes*) on a questionnaire item is necessary to indicate involvement in each of Part 1 through Part 5 and there are 12 questions being addressed in each part, a mean score of 3 or higher was used as the general guideline from which to decide whether the participant had been involved in the measured area. It is essential to note that, as is the case with all cutoff scores used for classification purposes, future research would be valuable to confirm the most appropriate cutoff scores in this type of research.

In Part 1 (How often have you seen these acts during the last school year?), the participant in the bystander role reported four times a mean score greater than 3 when responding to the 12 questions. The participant in Part 2 (How often have you been the recipient of these acts in the last school year?) reported a mean score of 3.1 to question 2, name calling and swearing. In part 3 of the questionnaire regarding being a bully, no mean scores greater than 3 were reported. When the participants were asked, how wrong would this be in your culture, all mean scores for all 12 questions were greater than 3. Daring to hurt, kicking and hitting, threatening and intimidating, and a gang of students picking fights had the highest reported mean scores.

In part 6 of the questionnaire, the participants were asked seven questions about their self-worth. The possible response categories were *really true* (1) or *sort of true* (2). A mean score of at least 1.5 on a questionnaire item is necessary to indicate

involvement in lower self-worth. There was no mean score greater than 1.5. The scores indicate that all participants have a lower than 1.5 mean score value in relationship to all the self-worth questions.

Descriptive Statistics: The Frequency of Bullying

The small sample size allowed a detailed descriptive and qualitative analysis to be carried out on the responses to direct and indirect bullying. The results are presented sequentially for each measure used. Table 3 presents an overview across the three roles of bystanders, victims, and bullies. The percentages given are for those participants who reported experiencing bullying *sometimes*, *often*, or *very often* during the last year. Those participants who reported experiencing bullying *rarely* or *never* were not included. The overall results reveal a pattern across the three roles where the degree of bullying observed as a bystander is the highest (57%) followed by the degree experienced as victim (29%) and that performed as bully (21%). A more detailed examination of the specific types of bullying reveals a similar pattern.

In addition, the results also suggest direct (verbal) bullying is the most predominant type of bullying reported by victims and bullies, whereas direct (physical) bullying is the recognized type of bullying identified by the bystander. For instance, for the bystander, the results indicate that about 57% of the participants witnessed bullying incidents, including: direct (physical) bullying (67%); direct (cognitive) bullying (42%); indirect (social) bullying (58%); and indirect (emotional) bullying (62%). In terms of the reported level of peer harassment, the results indicate a substantial number of individuals (about 29%) experience being victimized,

Table 3

Percentages of Participants Reporting on Their Experience of the Four Types of Bullying Across the Three Roles of Bystander, Victim and Bully

	Group	Roles %		
		Bystander	Victim	Bully
Types of bullying				
Direct				
	Male 22			
	Female 18			
Physical		67	24	22
Verbal		42	38	28
Indirect				
	Male 22			
	Female 18			
Social		58	25	14
Emotional		62	27	18
Overall Percentages		57	29	21

including: direct (physical) bullying (24%; e.g., the participants were the recipients of pushing and shoving and had things taken away from them); direct (verbal) bullying (38%; e.g., participants experienced name calling and teasing and ridiculing); indirect (social) bullying (25%; e.g., participants experienced a group of people picking on them and were victimized by a dare); and indirect (emotional) bullying (27%; e.g., participants were excluded from joining an activity and had rumours and untrue stories spread about them). Overall the 40 children reported the highest incidence of bullying, 38%, to be in the form of direct (verbal) bullying in their private school. In terms of reported bullying, the results indicate that on average about 21% of individuals were involved as bullies.

Descriptive Statistics: Cultural Bullying Experiences

When examining Table 1, it is noted that of the participants in this study 47% identified themselves as Non-Canadian while 53% stated that they were Canadian.

In Part 4 of the questionnaire (how often have you performed these acts during the last school year?), the participants answered questions in relation to their culture and bullying. It was significant that the participants found bullying unacceptable in their own culture. The findings were consistent throughout the entire 12 questions asked as seen in Table 4. The mean measurement is greater than 3.0 for all 12 questions, and four questions: daring another to hurt someone, kicking and hitting, threatening and intimidating, and picking fights all had a mean above 4.0.

The participants have had prior exposure in their own culture that it is not acceptable to bully, in particular direct (physical) bullying. However, as previously

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics – Culture Part 4 of Questionnaire

	Mean	Std. deviation
Pushing and shoving	3.08	2.23
Name calling and swearing	3.48	2.31
Picking on someone	3.38	1.94
Excluding someone	3.77	2.17
Demanding and taking things from others	3.98	2.17
Teasing and ridiculing	3.43	2.07
Daring another to hurt someone	4.08	2.29
Spreading rumours	3.30	2.27
Kicking and hitting	4.40	1.93
Threatening and intimidating	4.49	2.08
Picking fights	4.75	1.93
Writing hurtful unsigned notes	3.98	2.37

discussed 21% of the participants have been bullying in this school year. Fifty-seven percent have witnessed others being bullied at this private school. When asked, why do you think a boy/girl would get bullied, race, culture, and because they are different colour were responses by the majority of the participants of the study. Sixty percent of the children reported a comment relating to culture and race in their written responses. A grade 8 boarding boy writes, "I always have more punishment from a teacher because I can't speak English well and can't fight with Canadians because they will talk to teacher also teacher does not believe me. The teacher does not take the time to listen to my story due to my lack of English." A grade eight boy writes, "I am treated differently than others cause I live in a different place and we use other words than they use in Canada. Sometimes I feel like a pepper flake in a salt shaker. You feel bad."

Descriptive Statistics: Psychological Characteristics–Self Worth: Student's Responses

In Part 6 of the questionnaire the participants' self worth was measured using responses of *really true* and *sort of true*. Descriptive statistics using means and standard deviation were used, with the following results that are found in Table 5. The possible response categories were *really true* (1) or *sort of true* (2). A mean score of at least 1.5 on an item is necessary to indicate some degree of lower self-worth. There was no mean score greater than 1.5. The scores indicate that all participants have a lower than 1.5 mean score value in relationship to all the self-worth questions.

The participants did not support the above findings in Part 7 of the questionnaire with the following responses given by grade 7 and 8 girls

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics–Self Worth

	Mean	Std. deviation
Sure of self	1.38	.49
Happy the way I am	1.33	.47
Feel good about the way I act	1.33	.47
Sure I am doing the right thing	1.45	.50
A good person	1.33	.47
Want to stay the same	1.45	.50
Do things fine	1.28	.45

in the open-ended questions: “I feel sad and scared because you can get hurt with bullying I feel regret that people are like that because I hate to be made fun of; I feel sad and upset because you just don’t have physical pain, but you have mental pain as well, which can be worse; I am anxious as I always have the most trouble; I feel really bad or pathetic because its embarrassing and I don’t like the fact that they are bullying me; It makes you feel bad, because you feel unwanted; I feel sad because it is very bad and I think it is inappropriate; I don’t want to talk about bullying it makes me inferior and anxious; I feel sad because people put me down so they can become popular; I feel upset or unsure maybe my decision at that time was not right.”

There were 3 participants who expressed the following views. A grade 8 day boy wrote: “Not a lot – I feel cool and normal; I don’t care, I am sure of myself.” A day girl in grade 7 expressed: “I can’t stand to see people being bullied. It is not fair, what have they ever done?” Yet another grade 7 boarding girl wrote: “If everyone treats people nicely and with an occasional hello then I’m sure some people will boost their self confidence, *bullying isn’t right*.”

Inferential Statistics: Mean Group Differences: Boarding and Not Boarding Students

In Part 7 of the questionnaire the participants responded to the open-ended question number 7: When you think about or experience bullying, how do you feel? The responses were consistently: “I feel really bad, pathetic, appalled, anxious, sad, scared, depressed and alone without friends and family.” These feelings were expressed on all boarding students’ questionnaires.

Independent sample *t* test in Table 6 was conducted to compare the dependent variables safety, sadness, feelings of being alone and anxious scores for the

Table 6

Mean Differences Boarding and Not Boarding Students

	Boarding	N	Mean	St. deviation
Feel Safe	boarding	15	2.33	2.29
	not boarding	24	1.04	1.23
Sad	boarding	14	4.21	2.97
	not boarding	24	5.63	1.95
Alone	boarding	15	5.33	2.44
	not boarding	25	6.28	1.51
Anxious	boarding	12	1.42	1.51
	not boarding	23	1.52	1.75
<hr/>				
<i>t</i> test for equality of means				
		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Feel Safe				
Equal variances assumed		2.29	37.00	.03
Equal variances not assumed		2.01	9.15	.06
Sad				
Equal variances assumed		-1.77	36.00	.09
Equal variances not assumed		-1.59	19.69	.13
Alone				
Equal variances assumed		-1.52	38.00	.14
Equal variances not assumed		-1.35	20.58	.19
Anxious				
Equal variances assumed		-.18	33.00	.86
Equal variances not assumed		-.19	25.68	.86

independent variable of boarding and not boarding children. An independent samples t test was conducted to compare safety scores for boarding ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 2.29$; $t(2.29)$ ($p < .05$) and not boarding ($M = 1.01$, $SD = 1.23$) children at the private school. The boarding participants have a significant feeling of not feeling safe at the private school. The remaining variables of sadness, feeling alone, and anxious showed no significance in either boarding or not boarding children at the private school.

The participants further expanded on their thoughts in open ended questions when asked, why do you feel the way you do? Some of the responses were: "I feel really sad or pathetic because it's embarrassing and I don't like the fact that they are bullying me; it will go on; I feel anxious because I always have the most trouble; it hurts people and it scars them emotionally and mentally. It can drive people to extremes; sad and scared because you can get hurt; I feel sad because it upsets you and bullying is wrong."

Many of the participants, 73%, felt there was not much they alone could do except walk away; while 20% said you should just give in and receive the bullying as there was nothing you could do by yourself.

Inferential Statistics: Correlational Analysis: School Life

To examine the relations among the variables, Pearson correlations were conducted. In Part 5 of the questionnaire the participants were asked further questions about their school life this year (happiness, vandalism, weapons, safety, and friends). Correlational findings are found in Table 7.

Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity.

The relation between feeling safe and having a few friends at the private school was investigated using Pearson correlation. There was a significant positive correlation between the two variables of feeling safe and having a few friends at their private school ($r = .39^*$, $p < .05$).

The relation between having a few friends at the private school and being bullied was investigated using Pearson correlation between the two variables. There was a slight positive correlation between the two variables. When the participants lack friends and are bullied the correlation is reported at $.50^{**}$ ($p < .01$).

The relation between being bullied and use of weapons at the private school was investigated using Pearson correlation between the two variables. There was a significant positive correlation between the two variables. When a participant is bullied and weapons are brought to school there is a reported correlation of $.47^{**}$ ($p < .01$).

The relation between feeling alone, feeling safe, seeing vandalism, and being bullied at the private school was investigated using Pearson correlation between the four variables. There was a significant positive correlation between the four variables. When the participants felt alone and felt unsafe the correlation is reported at $.37^*$ ($p < .05$). When feeling alone and witnessing vandalism at the private school the correlation is reported at $.46^{**}$ ($p < .01$). Again, feeling alone and being bullied at the private school, the correlation is reported at $.43^{**}$ ($p < .01$).

Table 7

Student Life–Correlations

	Weapons	Vandals	Bullied	Friends Alone	Anxious
Students ($n = 40$)					
Feel safe Pearson correlation	.12	.24	.18	.39*	.37* .57**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.48	.14	.30	.01	.02 .01
Weapons Pearson correlation		.18	.49**	.06	.05 .06
Sig. (2-tailed)		.27	.01	.70	.74 .73
Vandals Pearson correlation			.26	.29	.46** .45**
Sig. (2-tailed)			.12	.08	.01 .01
Bullied Pearson correlation				.50**	.43** .10
Sig. (2-tailed)				.01	.01 .60
Friends Pearson correlation					.25 .25
Sig. (2-tailed)					.13 .16
Alone Pearson correlation					.34*
Sig. (2-tailed)					.05

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relation between being anxious, feeling safe, and witnessing vandalism at the private school was investigated using Pearson correlation between the three variables. There was a significant positive correlation among the three variables. When a participant is anxious and does not feel safe there is a reported correlation of $.57^{**}$ ($p < .01$). Also, when a participant is anxious and witnesses vandalism at the private school there is a reported correlation of $.45^{**}$ ($p < .01$). The participants in Part 7 of the questionnaire describe further in open-ended questions: "I feel afraid and sad because you never know how long it will go on or what will happen and somebody could get hurt." Eighty percent of the participants wrote about being sad, anxious, feeling bad, hurt, and upset. The participants describe theft of belongings and being physically harmed most often. Physical harm was reported with the grade seven and eight boys by physical hitting by an individual (e.g., "fighting or kicking") or with a weapon (e.g., "bat or knife"). The incidents were reported in the locker room/washroom (42%), school bus (19%), hallway (15%), then followed by the playground (8%); the locker room/washroom area and the hallways of the school being the most frequent areas. The collected data are supported by research indicating bullying takes place where adults are much less often present (Rigby, 2008).

Inferential Statistics: Correlational Analysis: Bully, Victim, Bystander, and Self-Worth

The relation between being a bully and feeling unhappy is $.36^{*}$ ($p < .01$). When a student reports being a victim and is not a good person there is a reported correlation of $.42$ ($p < .01$). Also, when a student is a bystander to a bullying incident and reports feeling unsure of self there is a correlation of $.46$ ($p < .01$). These

correlations in all three roles, being a bully, a victim, and a bystander, all have significance in regards to the self-worth of the children. The responses of the children were: "I don't want to talk about bullying it makes me inferior and anxious; I feel sad because people put me down so they can become popular; I don't feel good about myself and unsure." This in itself speaks to the fact that interventions must be sought to curb all aspects of bullying in respect to self-worth of all children.

Summary

In Chapter Four the participants' have expressed their observance of direct and indirect bullying. Fifty-seven percent of the children report being a bystander to bullying, while 29% indicate they have been a victim, and 21% of the children report that they have been a bully. Direct bullying (verbal) is the most predominant type of bullying reported by victims and bullies. Students from all cultures found bullying unacceptable in their culture. There was a significant positive correlation of feeling safe and having few friends at this private school. Students further reported a significantly positive correlation between feeling alone, safe, seeing vandalism, and being bullied. Feeling anxious, safe, and witnessing vandalism are also reported to have a significantly positive correlation. The descriptive statistics did not support decreased self-worth, however, the qualitative responses did support decreased self-worth.

Chapter Five will provide a brief discussion of the findings of the research and implications for practice and further research within the related literature. There is evidence from the data to support decreasing bullying at the private school, which I will discuss in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis investigated children's perceptions of bullying experiences and examined relations among children's bullying experiences and their perceptions of self-worth in a private school in Ontario, Canada. Incidental findings relating to intrapersonal functioning are also reported in Chapter Four. Bullying is defined as the abuse of physical and psychological power for the purpose of intentionally and repeatedly creating a negative atmosphere of severe anxiety, intimidation, and chronic fear in victims (Marini & Dane 2008; Marini et al. 1999). Marini and Dane further describe: "There appear to be several subtypes or variations of bullying, characterized by differences in the manifestation of the bullying behaviour. One distinction is whether the form of bullying is direct, hitting and name calling for example, or indirect, which involves circuitous attacks such as social exclusion or rumour spreading" (p. 2).

The conceptualization of bullying behaviours aims to provide a framework for development of educational strategies and interventions. In this private school designing interventions and strategies for individuals and tailoring programs is a definite advantage they have. Although the curriculum of the private school meets the Ontario public education standards, they are afforded opportunities to develop and implement programs specific and specialized to the student population that they serve at any given time. Their students spend more time each day at the private school than their counterparts at a public school; hence they can use some of this extra time to implement programs and educational sessions outside the schoolday hours. When an area of interest is identified, curriculum can be developed to capitalize on this

identified need and implemented in a program that fits into the private school schedule. This may be a dorm meeting, a lunch or supper discussion, or an after-school program.

Intrapersonal functioning of children includes such variables as anxiety, sadness, loneliness, ethnicity, and interpersonal relationships. Self-worth in this research refers to the evaluation of the self-concept, namely whether one feels good or bad generally about one's qualities and attributes (Harter, 1982). Particular events such as bullying can produce drastic changes in self-worth (Andreou, 2000; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Grills & Ollendick, 2002). Those students with high self-worth were less likely to become upset in response to stress-bullying (Andreou).

The literature on bullying behaviours recognizes that children who have been subjected to peer victimization have poor self-worth (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Olweus, 1978; Rigby & Slee, 1993). However, the literature is controversial in relation to children who bully. Olweus (1993) stated that children who bullied did not suffer from poor self-worth, although he recognized those passive bullies (followers and henchmen) might be anxious and insecure. Rigby and Slee also reported that the tendency to bully others was not associated with poor self-worth. Rigby and Slee argued that "bullying others" might have the effect of raising self-worth.

O'Moore (1997) found that children who bullied shared with victim's feelings of lower self-worth, than children who were not involved in bullying behaviours. Bryne (1994) also reported lower levels of self-worth among primary and postprimary children who either bully others or are victimized.

This research was mixed methodology (both quantitative and qualitative) analysis. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and *t* test measurements were used in the quantitative research. The research that was qualitative, open-ended questions and nondirectional in nature was carefully read and coded. As well, the participants' suggestions regarding ways to stop bullying behaviours in their private school were summarized for future consideration for formulating interventions and strategies for the private school.

To answer the research questions, self-report questionnaire methodology was relied upon. The general question underlying this thesis was as follows: What is the relation of children's bullying experiences (as bully, victim, and bystander) and self-worth perceptions in a private school?

The study focused on exploring the following research questions:

1. As an observer to bullying behaviours, are the student's social relationships, discipline, and safety affected?
2. As a participant in bullying behaviours, are the student's social relationships, discipline, and safety affected?
3. As a recipient of bullying behaviours, are the student's social relationships, discipline, and safety affected?
4. Is there an association between children's perceptions of bullying experiences and their perceptions of self-worth?

The questions have also been analyzed in terms of boarding and nonboarding students. The data were also analyzed in regards to culture and bullying and school-life.

In answering these main questions, this thesis has made a contribution toward the understanding of bullying and self-worth behaviours in a private school. There is some reporting on incidental findings relating to intrapersonal functioning. The literature that I have reviewed provides little mention of any Canadian research in private schools. Limited private school research has been published from Spain (Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999, cited in Smith et al., 1999) and South Africa, Malawi (Ohsako, 1999, cited in Smith et al.). By doing this research I was able to add the private school lens to bullying and self-worth investigation in Canada.

Students in the study included 40 middle school children from a private school in Ontario. Children from grade 7 and 8 agreed to participate. Both males and females participated in this research. The students completed the questionnaire in one session after their lunch. The purpose of the self-report questionnaire was to find out about the students' school-life: things such as social relationships, discipline, safety, self-worth, and bullying behaviours.

The data were analyzed once all the participants completed the questionnaire. Preliminary analyses involved profiling the sample in terms of grade, age, gender, living arrangements, citizenship, and school attended the previous year. Preliminary analyses also included examining the range of answers provided and determining the percentage of participants who selected each of the possible responses. The main analysis involved exploring the relationship between the two variables (self-worth and bullying). Analyses were also conducted to determine the percentage of children who were involved in being the bully, victim, and bystander. As well, analyses were conducted to determine the percentage of children who were involved in the types of

bullying (direct-physical and verbal and indirect-social and emotional). Further analyses were conducted using the dependent variable (boarding and nonboarding) and the independent variables of self-worth and intrapersonal functioning such as: safety, loneliness, sadness, and anxiety.

The central focus of this research was to examine the relation between variables of self-worth and bullying roles in a private school in Ontario, Canada. Bullying can produce drastic changes in self-worth (Andreou, 2000; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Grills & Ollendick, 2002). Grills and Ollendick state; "that lower self-worth tends to be associated with a greater number of anxiety symptoms" (p. 65). Rigby and Slee (1993) argued that "bullying others" might have the effect of raising self-worth.

When the data to answer question 1 were analyzed, it appears that overall 57% of the participants (22 males and 18 females) had been in a bystander role in the past year. Pushing, name calling, teasing, and spreading rumours were types of bullying that the bystander observed and reported the most. Physical bullying was the recognized type of bullying identified by the bystander. For instance, with the bystander, the results indicate that about 57% of the participants witnessed bullying incidents, including physical bullying (67%); verbal bullying (42%); social bullying (58%); and emotional bullying (62%). When the participants were asked: Why do you think a boy/girl would get bullied? Their written responses were: race, culture, and because they are different colour by 60% of the participants of this study. One boarding boy in grade 8 describes "he feels like a pepper flake in a salt shaker." Staff experience at the school Health Centre certainly agrees with the results of the research.

Students often come and express that they are being treated differently by others at the school due to their culture and race. The data collected indicate that the students are observing both direct and indirect types of bullying at the private school. Obviously the students can identify the types of bullying and need assistance to implement strategies to help arrest bullying at the private school.

Similar data analyses were carried out for question 2; the participants reported overall 21% of the children (22 males and 18 females) had been in a bully role in the past year. The students in this study reported direct (verbal) bullying (28%) to be the most frequent form of bullying. Verbal bullying would be teasing, insulting, and threatening. Direct (physical) bullying (22%), indirect (emotional) bullying (18%), and indirect (social) bullying (18%) were reported at the attached levels. The relation between having a few friends at the private school and being bullied was investigated using Pearson correlation between the two variables. The student who lacks friends and is bullied was found to have a positive correlation. Further the variables of feeling alone and feeling safe, seeing vandalism, and being bullied were investigated using Pearson correlation. Again, feeling alone and being bullied at the private school were found to have a significantly positive correlation. These findings are further supported in the open-ended questions. Students wrote: "I feel afraid and sad because you never know how long it will go on or what will happen and somebody could get hurt; I am afraid to go to sleep at night as it is not safe; even if you shut your bedroom door some students come in during the night and jump on you; and a boy hit me with a bat." A grade 8 girl from this study reported lying upside down on her bed, crying, because she felt so alone, sad, and afraid. She had come from Korea and was to remain in

Canada until the end of the school year. She felt alone and had no one to share her feelings with, as well, she expressed sadness regarding not seeing her family until June. Two grade eight boarding boys from this study expressed they were afraid to go to sleep at night in their dorm rooms for fear someone would come and jump on them in the night when they were sleeping.

When the data for question 3 were analyzed, it appears overall 29% of the participants (22 males and 18 females) had been a victim of bullying in the past year. Name calling was reported the highest area that the victim incurred. Direct (verbal) bullying (42%) is the recognized type of bullying identified by the victim, followed by indirect (emotional; 62 %), indirect (social; 25%) and lastly direct (physical; 24%). The relation of being bullied and use of weapons at the private school was investigated using Pearson correlation between the two variables. There was a strong positive correlation between the two variables. When a participant is bullied and weapons are brought to school there is a reported significant positive correlation. In the open-ended questions the children reported physical harm by physical hitting by an individual (e.g., "fighting or kicking") or with a weapon (e.g., "bat or knife"). Children report to the Health Centre with physical injuries which have occurred during the school day. Some of the recorded injuries are having one's hand stepped on when bending over and reaching for a pencil on the floor resulting in a broken hand; being hit with a bat in the locker room, and being in a fight with other students due to hurtful comments made about his mother.

Descriptive statistics were computed for question 4 when examining the association between children's bullying experiences and children's self-worth. The

participants' responses did not support the hypothesis of this research. This research predicted that there would be a significant relation between children's self-worth and bullying. Statistically this was not proven. However, when the correlations were studied from the bully, victim, and bystander roles there was some supported correlation of decreased self-worth, for example, when one was the bully and the measurement of unhappiness was reported with a significantly positive correlation. Again, when a student is a victim and is being not a good person there is a reported significant positive correlation. Also, when a student is a bystander to a bullying incident and reports feeling unsure of oneself, a significant positive correlation is reported in this research. Some responses to the open-ended questions supported the hypothesis. The following responses are supportive: "I feel sad and scared because you can get hurt with bullying; I feel regret that people are like that because I hate to be made fun of; I feel sad and upset because you just don't have physical pain, but you have mental pains as well, which can be worse; I am anxious as I always have the most trouble; I feel really bad or pathetic because its embarrassing and I don't like the fact that they are bullying me; It makes you feel bad, because you feel unwanted; I feel sad because it is very bad and I think it is inappropriate; I don't want to talk about bullying it makes me inferior and anxious; I feel sad because people put me down so they can become popular; I feel upset or unsure maybe my decision at that time was not right."

There were 3 participants who expressed the following views: "Not a lot-I feel cool and normal; I don't care, I am sure of myself; I can't stand to see people being bullied. It is not fair, what have they ever done? If everyone treats people nicely and

with an occasional hello that I'm sure some people will boost their self-confidence, *bullying isn't right*."

Analyses were also performed in relation to the participants' culture and bullying. Of the 40 participants, 53% were Canadians and 47% were from 12 other countries. The participants had all had prior exposure in their own culture to bullying and found it unacceptable, in particular direct (physical) bullying. When examining the descriptive statistics, the findings were consistent throughout the entire 12 questions asked. The mean measurement is greater than 3 for all 12 questions. A further 60% of the children reported a comment relating to culture and race in their written responses.

The final analysis this study examined was the dependent variables of boarding and not boarding correlated to the independent variables of safety, weapon use, vandalism, being bullied, loneliness, and anxiety, (intrapersonal functioning). A reported significant positive correlation for boarders was reported between the two variables of safety and having a few friends. Also, there was a significant positive Pearson correlation for boarders between the two variables of having a few friends and being bullied. The boarders reported a significant positive Pearson correlation between the two variables of being bullied and use of weapons. Feeling alone, feeling safe, seeing vandalism, and being bullied at the private school were investigated using Pearson correlation. The boarding participants have a significant feeling of not feeling safe at the private school when an independent samples *t* test was conducted. As well, for the boarders feeling alone and witnessing vandalism, the correlation is reported as significantly positive. Again, for the boarders feeling alone and being bullied at the

private school the correlation is reported to be significantly positive. Many of the boarding children are from countries that are such a distance from the school that they can go home only at the end of the school year. Some spend their school breaks, such as Christmas and March break, with an agent who, they do not know when they come to the private school. This must be very difficult for the children at this young age, particularly when they hear the excitement of the day students discussing their family plans for the school breaks.

In general, the realization is that the number of children at the private school that are affected by bullying either as the bystander, bully, or victim are rather high and the range of many behaviours involved, and the consequences must no longer be ignored. The children are seeking effective interventions based on empathy for the victim as well as understanding for the bully and the bystander.

It is evident from the data collected that the private school has bullies, victims, and bystanders. The children have expressed many concerns regarding bullying as well as their perceptions of their self-worth. What is to be done with their data and stories? These data need to be reflected upon, and an action plan needs to be formulated. The community as a whole including the children needs to develop a plan of action that best suits the needs of the entire private school community.

Implications for Theory

Bullying has been conceptualized as a relationship problem, as it is the assertion of interpersonal power through aggressive behaviours (Pepler & Craig, 2000). Marini and Dane (2008) make a distinction in bullying as direct or indirect. There is a power differential between the bully, victim, and bystander. As well,

bullying is not usually an isolated event but rather tends to be repeated forms of aggression. Where greater physical or psychological power is repeatedly abused, the bullying experience can create an increase in children's sense of lower self-worth, fear, and anxiety (intrapersonal functioning).

As with bullying, self-worth is a complex issue both conceptually and methodologically. Self-worth refers to the evaluation of the self-concept-namely, whether one feels good or bad generally about one's qualities and attributes (Harter, 1982). Particular events, such as bullying, can produce drastic changes in self-worth (Andreou, 2000; Grills & Ollendick, 2002). The thesis of this theory is bullying behaviours show that children who have been subjected to peer victimization have poor self-worth (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Olweus, 1978; Rigby & Slee, 1993).

In accordance with much of the research on bullying and self-worth, this study was approached to explore children's perceptions of bullying experiences and self-worth in a private school. In other words, in the hypothesis, it was predicted that there would be a relationship between children's self-worth and bullying. As discussed previously, there is very limited research on bullying in private schools in Ontario. However, there is previous research indicating that lower self-worth tends to be associated with bullying (Brown et al., 2005; Grills & Ollendick, 2002; Marini et al., 2006; Morris et al., 2006;).

The results of this study seem higher when compared with the findings of previous research. This could be attributed to some of the participants being boarding and the day students spending a greater length of time at the school than students attending a public school. The students' time at the private school is highly organized

and the students participate in the activities during the day and evening as a group. There is very little time that is spent away from the group of students individually. Public school students go home from school and go on to do activities perhaps with other groups of children or spend time with their parents. The participants of the study had all been involved in one of the three roles of bullying: bystander, victim or bully (Olweus, 2001; Marini et al., 2006; Rigby 2001). The findings in this research were highly consistent that the children found bullying unacceptable in their own culture (Whitney & Smith, 1993; Wolke et al., 2001). In this study, a significant moderate direct relationship was found between having friends and feeling safe (Bosacki et al., 2007), lack of friends and being bullied, and being bullied and use of weapons. Similar to this overall relationship, significant moderate direct correlations were also evidenced between anxiety, feeling safe, and witnessing vandalism and being bullied. The descriptive statistical results of this study did somewhat support the hypothesis that lower self-worth tends to be associated with the roles of bullying, victimization, and bystander. However, the open-ended questions did definitely support the hypothesis. In all three roles of bullying; being a bully, victim, and bystander the students all have strong positive correlation between the self-worth and intrapersonal functioning variables.

The results of this study overall supported that the children were involved in bullying by being a bully, victim, and bystander. The participants did not feel safe (afraid) while having few friends, when having few friends the children were bullied, bullying occurred with use of weapons, loneliness when being bullied, the children had feelings of anxiety, feeling unsafe, and when seeing vandalism, boarding students

felt unsafe, and in the open-ended questions self-worth was decreased. The lack of relation between bullying and self-worth in this study adds to the inconsistent findings that I found in the literature review.

Implications for Practice

Marini and Dane (2008) discuss four core strategies that could be used alone or in combination to develop strategies and interventions to implement a program to deal with bullying roles in the academic setting.

The whole-school approach (Olweus, 2004) engages all school personnel in the bullying intervention program. In private schools this would involve all faculty and staff including the dorm cleaning staff and maintenance staff. Often the dorm cleaning staff comes forth with concerns, as they are located right in the dorm rooms of the students and often are the first to hear of bullying incidents. Shortly after completing the data collection in this research they developed a harassment policy at the private school. Once the policy was developed, the entire school faculty and staff received professional development in regards to the policy and its implementation. In whole-school approaches the faculty needs to integrate the antiharassment policy in with the remainder of their curriculum. Since doing this research, this is a policy they now have at the private school. For example, when the faculty teaches sexual health, they also integrate relationship building into the sexual health discussions. Parents of students at the private school also now receive a copy of the harassment policy; as well, both parents and students sign a contract that they have read and will uphold the policy.

Another strategy that is used is the participant-role approach (Salmivalli et al., 2005). A way the private school has to implement this strategy: first have an assembly with all students and parents on opening day where the Headmaster talks about the school policy in regards to harassment as well as other policies. Following this, they have a student assembly and further talk about all forms of bullying. Immediately following the assembly the students are broken into groups of 15 students with a trained senior student. These smaller groups take three bullying scenarios (actual incidents that have happened at the school in the past) and do role-playing of the incidents. There is then further discussion, with a faculty/staff member present, on how to handle the situations presented. At this time students are directed to appropriate resources within the school. They have actually had a case of e-bullying brought forth by a new student. Together the student and the faculty have worked out some strategies to correct the bullying behaviour for her. The student felt confident enough to implement the strategies and reported back to the faculty in one week to talk about the outcome, which had positive results for her.

Another strategy is social competence training (Kazdin, 2003). Social competence training programs are used to teach skills in problem solving, social skills, and self-control (Marini & Dane, 2008). An example, the housemasters meet weekly with all students in their dorms, and one role of the housemaster is to teach problem solving skills, integrating students within the school community, to talk about conflict and how to manage confrontations, and how to live within the school community as a good citizen. As you can imagine, students living in such a close-knit community many of the above issues surface for all student. However, with close supervision of

the adults in the community, students learn the responsibility of being a good citizen at the private school. The private school has a requirement to do community service hours, and the hope of this intervention is to provide an opportunity to take the skills learned within the private school community to the community at large.

The final core strategy is parent-management training. The primary purpose of parent-management training is to improve parents' effectiveness by teaching them to establish clear rules, consistently reward appropriate behaviour, and effectively discipline inappropriate behaviour using procedures such as time out or privilege removal rather than harsh punishment (Kazdin, 2005; Marini & Dane, 2008). At the private school, with two thirds of the students boarding, there is often little contact with parents. Some of the parents do not have any direct contact with the school. Instead they hire an agency to place their child in the private school. Hence, all correspondence from the school is conducted through the agency, who in turn contacts the parents with any information that the agency deems necessary to pass on to the parents. The day students' parents are much more involved in the day-to-day operation of the school. These parents are informed and kept up-to-date with the procedures at the school. These parents have a parent association, and communication is very open between the administration and the parent group.

The findings of this study are of practical importance to educators, curriculum planning, and health care personnel. There is practical value when considering both the description of the extent and nature of bullying and the relationship investigated between children's self-worth and bullying behaviours. In terms of the descriptive data, the finding that approximately 57% of the participants observed bullying, 29%

reported being a victim, while 21% admitted to bullying. The children, in their responses in the qualitative data, as well as the descriptive data supported the need for an antibullying program in their private school. Overall the 40 children reported the highest incidence of bullying, 38%, to be in the form of direct (verbal) bullying in their private school. The findings indicate the requisite of providing students, parents, and private school staff and educators with a comprehensive understanding of what actually constitutes bullying behaviour and an understanding of the outcomes of such behaviour on the students' life at their private school.

The housemaster and faculty have collaborated about the bullying behaviours of the females in grade 7 and 8. Together, they felt that one strategy that they could personally use following this research was to meet weekly with the grade 7 female students at lunch. They had an identified bullying problem, both indirect and direct bullying. This involved both day and boarding girls. They met for a year over lunch and openly discussed bullying and how each one of them felt. The group went on to develop strategies to correct the bullying. They continued to meet weekly and discuss through a check in and out method regarding the past week of activities within this group. By the end of the school year the group had formulated a cluster of strategies that they were able to use and had the bullying well under control. They were able the following year to take these strategies forward to peer mentor the other students at the private school. Some have gone on now to be leaders at the school as prefects. In a private school there are many opportunities that faculty and administration can develop, such as this one, which would not be afforded in a public school setting. In a private school there is intimacy and the ability to be self-motivated to implement

strategies that in a public school setting would have to meet with board approval.

There is certainly collaboration between faculty and administration in the development of these programs and strategies in the private school, but the opportunities are bountiful and waiting to be developed.

The burden of change often rests with the faculty, staff, and the Assistant Headmaster of Middle School. The literature contributes that it is unclear that these primary agents have been properly trained pre- or postprofessionally to effect the needed changes or that they have the resources, time, and local support to carry them out if trained (Brown et al, 2005). It is my belief that many teachers do not feel confident in their abilities to handle bullying at school. However, in a private school setting the opportunities await the staff. Further, it is also not yet clear that effective, evidence-based interventions are widely available to train these professionals in Canada. However, it is recognized that bullying is partly a result of a web of family, peer, school, and societal influences. There needs to be a coordinated effort among researchers, school professionals, parents, and communities as a whole as well as a special emphasis on the perceptions of the students to bring about changes in the private school setting.

The children in the present study had many suggestions when asked: How can bullying be stopped at school? Overwhelmingly, the children all found suggestions and were very positive that bullying could be stopped at their private school. The vast majority felt that a caring and respectful environment needed to be created first. The children suggested that adults needed to provide a consistent approach to bullying as well as always take bullying seriously. Some other suggestions were to have more

security present and stricter supervision, teach children how to talk out a situation and also teach respect for one and another, have a program of inclusion, have a counselor available, and have a known policy that bullying is wrong. The children expressed that they overwhelmingly felt bullying made them sad and found bullying to be very hurtful both physically and mentally. There was no doubt in my mind after reading the children's responses that bullying was globally not acceptable. It was also evident that children were willing to make changes to their behaviour and were seeking the assistance of the community to make the changes.

The main focal point of this research is to investigate the relation between perceived self-worth and bullying experiences. As previously discussed, there is limited research available in private schools in Canada. Thus, while the results of this study hold practical significance, particularly for the private school in the study, further research should be carried out to further explore the association of bullying behaviours and self-worth. Bullying cannot be ignored. It can change the lives of the children. Recommendations to assist educators, students, parents, and the school community are a must, and school-wide antibullying programs are greatly recommended and needed.

The findings of this study and future studies can be put to use in the development of antibullying programs which aim to meet the needs of the school communities and individuals in the schools. The bullying findings in this study seem higher than previously reported in other studies. The findings may be directly related to the length of time students are at the private school, being with the same group of students in all activities and the class room, and being a boarding student at the school.

The private school community should be a safe and positive learning and living environment for all children, both boarding and nonboarding students. Most of the private school students come to school at 7:30 a.m. and remain at school often until after supper if they are day students, while boarding students are at the school for the school year. Considering the students spend many hours at the private school, program and curriculum development must look at all facets such as mental, emotional, and social health and well-being. The results of this study can assist educators and curriculum planners, better understand and hopefully ultimately remove bullying which is so pervasive in many of the schools.

Many strategies have been put in place at this private school. A future consideration for this private school is that there needs to be an outcome study done to focus on the implementations of the used strategies. Since bullying remains a major social and educational issue in schools and society in general, this private school should measure their programme outcomes. The literature at present (Marini & Dane, 2008) indicates that there is a need to evaluate and modify programs due to the identified subtypes of bullying differing in form (direct vs. indirect), function (proactive vs. reactive) and type of involvement (bullying, victimization, or both), as they have distinct relations with psychosocial factors such as temperament, social cognition, co morbid psychopathology, parenting, and peer relations (p. 11).

Implications for Further Research

As I stated previously, there is a very limited amount of research done in private schools (Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1999 cited in Smith et al., 1999; Rigby, 2008; Shariff, 2008), and clearly the findings of this study will open the door for a

variety of future research endeavours. The preliminary research on the relation of children's bullying experiences and perceptions of self-worth has brought to the surface many new questions that can and should be investigated.

Measuring bullying behaviours in schools is complicated by the fact that there is neither a universally accepted operational definition of bullying nor a commonly accepted method to gather the information. Cultural definitions also vary when defining bullying. The term bullying is shaped by English colloquialism, and an exact meaning is generally not found in the lexicon of other languages. For example, in France, school bullying is referred to as "faits de violence" (acts of violence) and includes all forms of violence. In order to make comparisons across all cultures more meaningful, it appears that future research would benefit from an increased specificity in the definition and operationalization of bullying (Zins et al., 2007).

A limitation of the study is the wide use of correlation findings. Future research might look at an expanded use of other types of findings as well as looking at gender and age implications.

This study looked at the understanding and description of possible curriculum development in the private school where the research was completed. The researcher did not investigate or develop a curriculum to address bullying and self-worth at this private school. The questionnaire and information obtained can be adapted and used in other private or public schools, however the results of the study should be viewed as restrictive and should not be generalized as typical of all students undergoing a similar experience. While the results of this study may be of interest to other private schools and suggest opportunities for further research, they should not be taken as categorical

for all. It is important to note all students are different and private schools can vary dramatically in policy, culture, and student enrollment. As well as looking at the students' responses, research should look at the responses of peers and teachers of the reported bullying. It is likely to both improve accuracy of assessment and provide useful information for cross-validation studies.

In this study, two main threats to internal validity (subject effect and testing effect) have been identified as limitations to the research. Although the threats have been minimized due to the use of certain procedures within this study, future research may avoid such threats by using alternative measurement techniques. The first threat to internal validity in this study involved subject effects. In order to measure children's involvement in bullying behaviours, self-report questionnaires were used. When using self-report measures, there is a risk that participants may respond untruthfully due to a need to appear positive and "socially desirable." The testing effect was identified as the second possible threat to internal validity. Since both of the main variables were being measured in the same questionnaire, there is the possibility that participants may be able to determine the link between the two variables of study and thus answer accordingly.

Questionnaire method of data collection is limited by the inability to identify the complex, multilevel processes underlying bullying interactions and by the students' ability to accurately report on the phenomenon of bullying. The behaviours of the students cannot be recorded firsthand as they occur, hence external validity is lessened. Second, the researcher is not able to observe all participants (bullying

student, victim, observers, and faculty) of the bullying incident. Future research needs to employ multimethods such as interviews, questionnaires, and observations.

The use of more psychometrically sound measures and consistency in use of similar instruments across studies will lead to better understanding of the data. For example, in this study, I adjusted the *Modified School-Life Questionnaire*.

Intervention studies would also benefit from added clarity in focus, such as whether or how an intervention addresses the different forms of bullying (direct/indirect) inherent in current definitions (Zins et al., 2007).

The sample is limited in that only two grades from one private school were considered in this study. Therefore, the findings may not be able to be generalized to students in other school settings who reside in other geographic settings. Finally, future studies might take other variables into consideration as well as doing a longitudinal multimethod study. In a longitudinal survey design, the researcher can collect data about trends with the same population over a period of time. It was my hope to do this as I continued my studies. I had planned to collect more data at the grade 10 and 12 levels on these same students.

Bullying research is a relatively young field of study, but great advancements have been made in raising awareness of this negative behaviour on children's psychosocial adjustments. As well, schools have been alerted to the need for interventions. As addressed, there is a need for evidence-based intervention in schools. I fully expect continued progress in the areas of assessment research and comparison outcome intervention research (Zins et al., 2007).

Conclusion

Kasseran Ingera? In Africa the Masai tribe greeting when you meet someone is “Kasseran Ingera?” which means, “How are the children?” I believe it is a greeting that is reflective of my research and a greeting that this private school community should constantly consider. Without the wellbeing of the children—is there a need for a private school?

After analyzing the data from this study, reference to the implications of the findings will be discussed and strategies developed. The strategies will be shared across the private school community to help plan lessons and health teaching with students, parents, and faculty specific to the needs identified in the study.

As the entire community becomes familiar with knowledge regarding bullying and self-worth in their community, the opening coroner’s report should be addressed consistently at the private school. Within the community all should be able to move about with protection from bullying, whether it is direct or indirect, with comfort and ease.

At the end of this research, my hope is that a student will be able to say that I cared enough to provide her/him with moral, psychological, cognitive, and intellectual direction in their private global school by sharing my research with their community.

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Appendix A

Definitions

Anxiety: I will define anxiety as a state of being uneasy, apprehensive, or worried about what may happen (Swearer, Grills, Haye, & Tam Cary, 2004; Grills & Ollendick, 2002). This definition is further supported by Morris Rosenberg (1965), suggesting that anxiety is manifested by "(a) interference with thinking processes and concentration, (b) a frequently object-less feeling of uncertainty and helplessness, (c) intellectual and emotional preoccupation, and (d) blocking of communication". (p. 149).

Bullying: "Bullying can be defined as the abuse of physical and psychological power for the purpose of intentionally and repeatedly creating a negative atmosphere of severe anxiety, intimidation and chronic fear in victims" (Marini, Dane, & Bosacki, 2006; Marini, Spear, & Bombay, 1999). In this study, "bullying" will be used interchangeably with "bullying behaviours."

Direct Bullying: refers to face-to-face physical or verbal confrontations. An example of direct bullying would be name calling and hitting.

Indirect Bullying: described as less visible harm-doing, such as spreading rumours and social exclusion. An example of indirect bullying would be circuitous attacks and social exclusion or rumour-spreading.

(Marini & Dane, 2008; Roberts, 2006).

Intrapersonal functioning: is a correlative ability, turned inward. It is a capacity to form an accurate, veridical model of oneself and to be able to use that model to operate effectively in life (Gardner, 1999). Intrapersonal functioning refers to self-

worth and the lack of self-worth, feelings of sadness, loneliness, anxiety, depression, interpersonal relationships, and ethnicity.

Private School: The private school in Ontario that the participants attend in this study. Approximately 5% (1 out of 19 students) of all elementary and secondary students attend private schools in Canada. Six hundred and thirty students pay tuition to attend this private school in Canada. Thirty-seven percent of children attending private schools in Canada have a reported family income greater than \$100,000. per year (Education Statistics Review, 1998). Approximately two thirds of the students board at the school, and the remainder are day students. The students in attendance this year represent 34 countries from around the world.

Self-worth: self-worth refers to the evaluation of the self-concept, -namely, whether one feels good or bad generally about one's qualities and attributes (Harter, 1982).



COPY

 Brock University

Senate Research Ethics Board

Extensions 3943/3035, Room AS 302

DATE: April 08, 2003

FROM: Joe Engemann, Chair
Senate Research Ethics Board (REB)

TO: Sandra Bosacki, Education
Alice Schutz, Education
Zopito Marini, Child and Youth Studies
Barbara Papp

FILE: 02-220, Papp

TITLE: Children's Bullying Experiences and Perceived Self Worth in a Private Independent School

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above research proposal.

DECISION: Accepted as clarified.

This project has been approved for the period of **April 08, 2003** to **October 31, 2003** subject to full REB ratification at the Research Ethics Board's next scheduled meeting. The approval may be extended upon request. *The study may now proceed.*

Please note that the Research Ethics Board (REB) requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and approved by the REB. The Board must approve any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to www.BrockU.CA/researchservices/forms.html to complete the appropriate form **REB-03 (2001) Request for Clearance of a Revision or Modification to an Ongoing Application**.

Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored. A Final Report is required for all projects, with the exception of undergraduate projects, upon completion of the project. Researchers with projects lasting more than one year are required to submit a Continuing Review Report annually. The Office of Research Services will contact you when this form **REB-02 (2001) Continuing Review/Final Report** is required.

Please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence.

For the following questions please circle the option that best describes your answer. Base your answers on the interaction you have had during the last year of school.

Part 1: How often have you seen these acts during the last school year?

	<u>Please circle one number</u>				
1. Pushing and shoving	0	1	3	5	7
2. Name calling and swearing	0	1	3	5	7
3. A group of students picking on someone	0	1	3	5	7
4. Excluding someone from joining an activity	0	1	3	5	7
5. Demanding and taking things from others	0	1	3	5	7
6. Teasing and ridiculing	0	1	3	5	7
7. One student daring another to hurt someone	0	1	3	5	7
8. Spreading rumours and untrue stories	0	1	3	5	7
9. Kicking and hitting	0	1	3	5	7
10. Threatening and intimidating	0	1	3	5	7
11. A gang of students picking fights	0	1	3	5	7
12. Writing hurtful and unsigned notes	0	1	3	5	7
13. Other _____	0	1	3	5	7

Part 2: How often have you been the recipient of these acts during the last school year?

	<u>Please circle one number</u>				
1. Pushing and shoving	0	1	3	5	7
2. Name calling and swearing	0	1	3	5	7
3. A group of students picking on someone	0	1	3	5	7
4. Excluding someone from joining an activity	0	1	3	5	7
5. Demanding and taking things from others	0	1	3	5	7
6. Teasing and ridiculing	0	1	3	5	7
7. One student daring another to hurt someone	0	1	3	5	7
8. Spreading rumours and untrue stories	0	1	3	5	7
9. Kicking and hitting	0	1	3	5	7
10. Threatening and intimidating	0	1	3	5	7
11. A gang of students picking fights	0	1	3	5	7
12. Writing hurtful and unsigned notes	0	1	3	5	7

13. Other _____ 0 1 3 5 7

Part 3: How often have **you performed (done)** these acts during the last school year?

	<u>Please circle one number</u>				
1. Pushing and shoving	0	1	3	5	7
2. Name calling and swearing	0	1	3	5	7
3. A group of students picking on someone	0	1	3	5	7
4. Excluding someone from joining an activity	0	1	3	5	7
5. Demanding and taking things from others	0	1	3	5	7
6. Teasing and ridiculing	0	1	3	5	7
7. One student daring another to hurt someone	0	1	3	5	7
8. Spreading rumours and untrue stories	0	1	3	5	7
9. Kicking and hitting	0	1	3	5	7
10. Threatening and intimidating	0	1	3	5	7
11. A gang of students picking fights	0	1	3	5	7
12. Writing hurtful and unsigned notes	0	1	3	5	7
13. Other _____	0	1	3	5	7

Part 4: In the country that you live in, how **wrong** would this be in your culture?

	<u>Please circle one number</u>				
1. Pushing and shoving	0	1	3	5	7
2. Name calling and swearing	0	1	3	5	7
3. A group of students picking on someone	0	1	3	5	7
4. Excluding someone from joining an activity	0	1	3	5	7
5. Demanding and taking things from others	0	1	3	5	7
6. Teasing and ridiculing	0	1	3	5	7
7. One student daring another to hurt someone	0	1	3	5	7
8. Spreading rumours and untrue stories	0	1	3	5	7
9. Kicking and hitting	0	1	3	5	7

Part 6: Please **circle** either **"really true"** or **"sort of true"**, when answering the following questions.

- | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| 1. I feel sure of myself. | "really true" | "sort of true" |
| 2. I am happy the way I am. | "really true" | "sort of true" |
| 3. I feel good about the way I act. | "really true" | "sort of true" |
| 4. I am sure I am doing the right thing. | "really true" | "sort of true" |
| 5. I am a good person. | "really true" | "sort of true" |
| 6. I want to stay the same. | "really true" | "sort of true" |
| 7. I do things fine. | "really true" | "sort of true" |

Part 7:

1. Where do acts of bullying occur most frequently? (Pick the top 3 locations)

Classroom ____	Playground ____	Locker area ____	bus ____
Washroom ____	Gym ____	Hallways ____	Other ____

2. If you were bullied, how would you handle it? (Pick the top 3 ways)

Go to an adult ____	Talk it out ____	Walk away ____	Tell a teacher ____
Get peers to help ____	Fight back ____	Give in ____	Other ____

3. What does the term "bullying" mean to you?

4. Why do you think a girl would get bullied?

5. Why do you think a boy would get bullied?

6. How can bullying be stopped at school? (Please suggest as many ways as you can)

7. When you think about or experience bullying - how do you feel?

Why?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUGGESTIONS. I VALUE YOUR
CONTRIBUTION.**

Appendix D

Descriptive Statistics

Range of Responses for Part 1: Descriptive Statistics

How often have you seen these acts during the last school year?

Questions asked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Pushing and shoving	40	0	7	4.6	2.0
Name calling and swearing	40	0	7	5.3	1.7
A group of students picking on someone	40	0	7	3.9	2.0
Excluding someone from joining an activity	40	0	7	3.4	1.8
Demanding and taking things from others	40	0	7	2.9	2.4
Teasing and ridiculing	40	0	7	4.7	2.3
One student daring another to hurt someone	40	0	7	3.4	2.8
Spreading rumours and untrue stories	40	0	7	4.8	2.3
Kicking and hitting	40	0	7	2.7	2.2
Threatening and intimidating	40	0	7	2.5	2.0
A gang of students picking fights	40	0	7	1.5	1.9
Writing hurtful notes	40	0	7	1.7	2.1

Range of Responses for Part 2: Descriptive Statistics

How often have you been the recipient of these acts during the last school year?

Questions asked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Pushing and shoving	40	0	7	1.8	2.3
Name calling and swearing	39	0	7	3.1	2.5
A group of students picking on someone	40	0	7	1.8	2.4
Excluding someone from joining an activity	40	0	7	1.8	2.4
Demanding and taking things from others	40	0	7	1.6	2.3
Teasing and ridiculing	40	0	7	2.2	2.1
One student daring another to hurt someone	40	0	7	1.6	2.5
Spreading rumours and untrue stories	40	0	7	1.5	2.1
Kicking and hitting	39	0	7	1.3	2.2
Threatening and intimidating	40	0	7	1.3	1.9
A gang of students picking fights	40	0	7	.7	1.5
Writing hurtful notes	39	0	7	.7	1.5

Range of Responses for Part 3: Descriptive Statistics

How often have you performed (done) these acts during the last school year?

Questions asked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Pushing and shoving	40	0	7	1.5	2.0
Name calling and swearing	39	0	7	2.3	2.2
A group of students picking on someone	40	0	7	1.0	1.4
Excluding someone from joining an activity	40	0	7	1.4	1.6
Demanding and taking things from others	40	0	7	1.1	1.7
Teasing and ridiculing	40	0	7	1.2	1.5
One student daring another to hurt someone	38	0	7	1.3	1.6
Spreading rumours and untrue stories	40	0	7	.7	1.4
Kicking and hitting	40	0	7	1.2	1.8
Threatening and intimidating	39	0	7	.8	1.4
A gang of students picking fights	40	0	7	.6	1.1
Writing hurtful notes	40	0	7	.5	1.0

Range of Responses for Part 4: Descriptive Statistics

In the country that you live in, how wrong would this be in your culture?

Questions asked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Pushing and shoving	40	0	7	3.1	2.2
Name calling and swearing	40	0	7	3.5	2.3
A group of students picking on someone	39	0	7	3.4	1.9
Excluding someone from joining an activity	39	0	7	3.8	2.2
Demanding and taking things from others	40	0	7	4.0	2.2
Teasing and ridiculing	40	0	7	3.4	2.1
One student daring another to hurt someone	40	0	7	4.1	2.3
Spreading rumours and untrue stories	40	0	7	3.3	2.2
Kicking and hitting	40	0	7	4.4	2.0
Threatening and intimidating	37	0	7	4.5	2.1
A gang of students picking fights	40	0	7	4.8	1.9
Writing hurtful notes	40	0	7	4.0	2.4

Range of Responses for Part 5: Descriptive Statistics

Please answer these other questions about your school-life in the past year.

Questions asked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
How often do you feel happy at school?	40	0	7	4.7	2.1
How often have you seen students bring weapons to school?	40	0	7	1.0	1.7
How often have you seen vandalism at school?	39	0	7	2.4	1.9
How often do you think students get Bullied because they are different?	38	0	7	3.4	2.0
How often do you feel safe at school?	39	0	7	1.5	1.8
How often do you feel sad at school?	38	0	7	5.1	2.4
How many friends you have at school?	39	0	7	2.7	2.5
How often do you eat lunch alone at school?	40	0	7	5.6	1.9
How often do you feel different from other students in your school?	40	0	7	1.5	2.6
If you are bullied, do you feel anxious?	35	0	7	1.5	1.7
Do you feel a part of this private school community?	32	0	7	5.0	2.2

Range of Responses for Part 6: Descriptive Statistics

Please circle either "really true" or "sort of true", when answering the following questions.

Questions asked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I feel sure of myself.	40	1	2	5.0	2.2
I am happy the way I am.	40	1	2	1.4	.5
I feel good about the way I act.	40	1	2	1.2	.5
I am sure I am doing the right thing.	40	1	2	1.5	.5
I am a good person.	40	1	2	1.3	.5
I want to stay the same.	40	1	2	1.6	.5
I do things fine.	40	1	2	1.3	.5
